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The Works of Pascal.
Vol. III

THE THOUGHTS, ON RELIGION,

AND

EVIDENCES OF CHRISTIANITY,

OF

PASCAL;

N N e 3

(NEWLY TRANSLATED AND ARRANGED, WITH LARGE ADDITIONS FROM ORIGINAL MSS;)

FROM THE FRENCH EDITION OF

M. P. FAUGÈRE.

WITH INTRODUCTION, NOTES, ETC.,

BY GEORGE PEARCE, ESQ.,

EDITOR AND TRANSLATOR OF "THE PROVINCIAL LETTERS, WITH VILLEMAIN'S ESSAY, MEMOIR, ETC.;" AND OF "THE MISCELLANEOUS WRITINGS OF PASCAL."

N N e 33

"Un monument qui n'est qu'une œuvre de restauration, mais qui *durera*, puisqu'il enferme les reliques d'un des plus beaux génies qui aient honoré la France et l'humanité."—FAUGÈRE.

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INTRODUCTION.

In the volume immediately preceding this, and forming the second of the present series, a Narrative was furnished, drawn up by parties present at the scene, of the memorable discourse delivered by Pascal to his assembled friends, in which he detailed the plan and outline of his projected work on the Evidences and Nature of the Christian Religion. The circumstances under which that conversation took place, the parties to whom it was addressed, and those various features from which it derives an interest, were referred to in the biographical sketch prefixed to a previous volume. The materials collected in the prosecution of this undertaking are now presented to the reader; and it will perhaps conduce to his convenience, to be furnished with a brief summary of the leading topics embraced in this copious, yet still imperfect, collection.

The peculiar circumstances under which the greater number of those fragmentary writings were composed; the haste with which, through the writer's bodily sufferings, they were, for the most part, thrown off; the carelessness of their subsequent disposal; and the difficulties attending their recovery; have been already described. The reader is, however, once more reminded, that, by the

labours of the French Editor, whose work is here followed, very large additions to the existing materials have been collected from hitherto unexplored manuscripts, and an entirely new and improved arrangement of the whole has been made. With a kind of kaleidoscope art, or as if by the touch of an enchanter, the most incongruous materials have been brought into symmetry and order. Criticism, moral axioms, and theological discussions, which heretofore lay side by side in singular confusion, are now marshalled under their proper heads. Regular sequences of argument and illustration have been formed; the series of topics discussed, while retaining for the most part the author's own titles, have been thrown into a cumulative form; and the result is, to leave far less cause than heretofore for regret that this great writer was not enabled to follow out, in a more perfect manner than he has done, his comprehensive scheme.

In the discourse referred to, it will be remembered, the case was supposed of a person who, "having passed his life in ignorance of, and indifference to everything,—and especially *himself*,—is brought, at length, to contemplate himself," by the portraiture which had previously been drawn of man, "even to the most secret recesses and movements of his heart." Such a supposition enabled the speaker with the more advantage to commence with the elementary truths of religion, and gradually to advance from them to its deepest mysteries. It will contribute to the interest of the reader to carry with him a suppository personage of this description, in the sketch now about to be given;—(and it is not,

indeed, necessary to explore pagan antiquity or heathen darkness to find such a one!)—and still more will it be an advantage to him to do so, when he enters upon the perusal of the work itself.

The paper originally composed by Pascal for a Preface or Introduction to his Treatise, but which, in the several editions heretofore published, has appeared, with many variations, and under different titles, in the form of a detached Essay, is now restored (with the addition of much original matter) to its first integrity of text, and appears in its proper place at the head of the work. In this paper, the doctrines of the existence of a God, and of an unending existence to come, are broadly laid down, as the foundations of all religion; and the ignorance, folly, and presumption of those by whom they are neglected, rather than impugned, are exposed by the most popular representations. The arguments employed are level to every capacity. They are adapted to work upon the feelings of the ingenuous, and to arrest the attention of the man of the world. "They who set themselves up as opponents to religion," with lofty rebuke he begins, "should at least know *what* it is they oppose." "What does it avail such persons to allege," he continues, "that while thus avowedly neglecting the means of discovering truth, they can find nothing that reveals their Maker to them?" "Negligence such as this, in a matter which concerns themselves, their eternal interests, their all, excites my indignation rather than my pity; it astonishes and shocks me; it is unnatural and monstrous!" "Who would desire for his friend," he asks, "the man that thus acted; who select him as his confidant; who resort to him for

solace in his affliction? What advantage is it to hear another say, he has thrown off the yoke of conscience; he has no belief in a God; he considers the soul to be a mere *breath or vapour?*" . . . "Nothing shows more *abjectness* of spirit," is his indignant exclamation, "than to be ignorant of man's unhappiness without God; nothing proves more malignancy of heart, than not to *desire* the truth of eternal rewards; no *cowardice* is greater than to affect hardihood against God!"—There was, perhaps, when Pascal wrote, more avowed disregard of religion, and more explicit denial of revelation, than is to be found in the more guarded habits of the present day; but the scope of the reasoning in this discourse is no less fitted now, than at that period of undisguised hardihood, to rouse to reflection the multitudes who pass their lives in neglect of religion, and indifference to their eternal interests.

The critical reader will be interested in an unpublished variation of a part of this paper, and a collection of Notes, illustrative of the original text, and which furnish various topics supplementary to the main subject.

But to enforce conviction of the existence of a First Cause, and to impress the mind with its own eternal destiny, are but the rudimentary steps in religious instruction; and leave the awakened conscience far short of true peace and solid hope. Heathen philosophy, even, had made large advances in the discovery of these elementary principles. Pascal well knew that much remained to be done, before the spirit should be prepared for a hearty reception of a divine revelation. Many truths were to be addressed to the understanding, and many

convictions impressed upon the heart; and he begins with showing, under the title of "*Amusement*," the obstacles which religion encounters, in the multifarious labours and importunate dissipations of human existence.

"We burden men from infancy," he says, "with the care of their honour, their property, their friends; and even with that of their friends' property and honour also." . . . "They are brimful of occupation, and impelled to incessant labour from morning to night." . . . "What more," he supposes it to be asked, "what more could possibly be done to render men unhappy?" "You have but to take from them all these cares," is the reply; "for then they would have to consider, what they are, whence they came, whither they are going; and therefore it is that they cannot have too much occupation and distraction of mind." . . . "In this way it is," he proceeds, "that the whole of life is spent. Repose is sought by the mastery of obstacles; and when these are mastered, the repose becomes oppressive. The mind then falls back upon the ills which we actually feel, or those which are threatened. And if immunity from all these were really experienced, *Ennui* would force its secret entrances into the spirit, and pervade and envenom its every part."

Throughout this chapter, the argument pursued is, that the absorbing occupations and amusements to which mankind are addicted, are at once the effect and the cause of their insensibility to religion. Resorted to, at first, for relief under the uneasiness of fruitless conjectures respecting the past, the present, and the future, of our transitory existence,—we end by renouncing all con-

cern respecting our mysterious original, and all hope of the great Hereafter; and abandon ourselves, with reckless indifference, to the fleeting cares and pleasures of the present moment. The pictures drawn in support of these views, may be deemed, perhaps, somewhat over-coloured. The most engrossing labours, and even very exciting amusements, (if innocent in their nature,) are often seen to be not incompatible with deep convictions of duty to our fellow-men, and fervent piety towards God. Who does not feel, also, that labour,—whether mental or bodily, whether self-imposed or involuntary,—is the beneficent law of human existence, and the highest charm of life? But the descriptions of Pascal apply to the worldly-minded, the frivolous, the sensual, and the profane; and it is to such as these that a very moderate knowledge of human nature shows the excitement of new pursuits and ever-varied pleasure to be indispensable: solitude is a weariness, and reflection insupportable.

In the succeeding chapter we are led to a consideration of the "*Deceptive Influences*" to which man is subjected, in all the stages of his existence, and in the varying circumstances in which he is placed. This might have seemed an inquiry, more fitted to the schools of metaphysics and psychology, than to the great theme which Pascal proposed. His very opening proposition, however, explicitly lays down the connexion of this topic with Theology. "Man," he says, "is, by the constitution of his nature, a being full of error; and this is ineffaceable, excepting by *grace*." His aim is consequently, throughout this section, to show how, by the prevailing influences of the imagination, we are led into

every species of delusion, both in regard to the things of time and sense, and, yet more, those of the soul and eternity.

The opening description of Imagination; "the mighty power,—the perpetual antagonist of reason,—which delights to show its ascendency by bringing her under its control and dominion," shows the hand of a master. "It has its joys and its sorrows, its health, its sicknesses, its wealth, its poverty; it compels reason, in spite of herself, to believe, to doubt, to deny; it suspends the exercise of the senses, and imparts to them again an artificial acuteness: it has its follies and its wisdom: and the most perverse thing of all is, that it fills its votaries with a complacency more full and complete even than reason can supply." We are then presented with sketches, whose fidelity the student of human nature at once recognizes. The magistrate, the philosopher, the sick and hypochondriacal, the well-fee'd advocate, the robed and ermined Judge, the solemn physician, the Sovereign surrounded with his guards and state, pass in succession before us;—all puppets themselves of this ambitious power, or instruments by which its mastery over mankind is exercised. Under its sway, judgment totters on her throne; and the most exemplary dispositions yield to her delusions.

In this way it is clearly established, that imagination is little more than an instrument of deception and mischief, except when brought under the renovating influence of Christian principle. Then, indeed, this mysterious quality of the mind becomes the fruitful source of all that is valuable in human conduct, and graceful in intellectual

achievement. Then the mournful, or the sordid realities of life, are refined and elevated into beneficence, eloquence, and beauty. The sense of man's sufferings or wrongs is deepened to intensity: every object of mental contemplation is clothed with superhuman charms. The commoner instinct of humanity is heightened to enthusiasm; plunges, with Howard, into the loathsome dungeon; arrests, with Wilberforce and Buxton, a trade of blood; kneels, with Fry,—the gentle messenger of peace and hope,—amidst hardened bands of profligacy and despair; or, with *one*,—the pride of our own times, and whom a grateful posterity will associate with any or all of the preceding,—forsakes the circles of aristocracy and fashion; gathers, with genial patronage, the friendless, the homeless, the half-clad; traverses, in pilgrimages of benevolence, the revolting regions of uncared-for suffering; and transforms the haunts of squalor and vice into abodes of comfort, purity, and health.* Then, also, Fancy weaves her sweetest, because hallowed creations; strews the rugged paths of toil-worn existence with flowers and verdure; subdues the sensual or the frivolous in our nature to intellectual power and grace; or quits, with a Dante, or a Milton, the bounds of time and space, explores unknown worlds, and soars to the regions of Eternity, to the abodes of angels, and to the presence of God!

A distinct section, formed out of axioms, heretofore scattered promiscuously throughout Pascal's writings, is next assigned to a portraiture of *Self-Love*. This baleful passion is anatomized with a sad fidelity, and a keen,

* May I be permitted to inscribe here the name of ASHLEY.

though chastened, satire. Yet may the writer himself be considered as furnishing an instance of the universality of this misguiding propensity. Enamoured of the picture he had drawn of a mind indisposed to reproof, reluctant to the acknowledgment of error, and fortified in its own sense of right and virtue, he extends his censure to the case of those who had, in his own time, and in neighbouring nations, revolted from the tyranny and corruptions of the Romish Confessional, and determined to commit their errors and their sins *alone* to the indulgent bosom of Omniscience. With a sophistry, which fills us with wonder in one so acute, he exclaims,—"How unjust and unreasonable is the human heart, that it should take amiss to be obliged to do that in regard to *one* individual, which would, in a certain sense, be proper were it done in regard to all men! For can it ever be right that we should *deceive?*" But, after making this reservation, all must feel the pungency and force of such a description of self-love as the following:—"It desires to be great, and it sees itself to be little; it desires to be happy, it sees itself to be miserable; it desires to be perfect, it sees itself full of imperfection; it desires to be the object of universal love and esteem, and it sees that its faults draw down only aversion and contempt."

The next chapter, which bears the title of "*Disproportions, or Inequalities in Man,*" is still preliminary, and incidental to the great subjects of enquiry. It treats, among other topics, of the two infinitudes of magnitude and minuteness in creation; and is one of the compositions in which Pascal has tasked his highest powers. Its object is to show how the Creator's works transcend the researches of

unassisted reason; to deter from exorbitant curiosity and fruitless search; and to lead man, under a humbling sense of the limitation of his powers, to receive with deference and gratitude the revelations of Infinite Wisdom. These counsels are given in no spirit of disparagement of human science: for by whom was all science pursued and exhausted with more untiring avidity, than by the writer? But their intention was to administer deserved reproof to that presumptuous philosophy, which aimed to make itself independent of God; and to enforce the great truth, that all learning and all knowledge are valueless, without that highest of all,—the knowledge of ourselves, of God, and of a Redeemer. "See the consequences of mere *natural* knowledge!" is the exclamation which, at the very outset, furnishes the key to the whole discussion. For, in fact, while Pascal was all *doubt* in matters of mere human learning and knowledge, till the rigid demands of reason and judgment were satisfied, his mind never wavered upon questions on which Divinity had shed his illumination; but his own prepossessions yielded with infantile simplicity at the voice of God.

"Let man, then," he proceeds, "raise his views above the petty objects which surround him, and contemplate the entire expanse of nature, in all its majestic perfections; let him gaze upon that dazzling orb, suspended, from the commencement of time, in mid-heaven, like the gorgeous lamp of the universe; let him consider this our earth as but a minute point in comparison with the mighty circle which that luminary describes; and then let him remember with astonishment, that this prodigious orbit itself is again nothing more than the minutest

speck, in comparison with that which the circling firmament of the constellations embraces!

"But if the evidence of the sight is here arrested, let imagination pass beyond its limits; she will grow weary in conceiving, sooner than nature in furnishing, matter for her apprehension. The whole visible world is but as an imperceptible atom in the ample bosom of Nature. Thought is here baffled. We may swell, as we will, our conception beyond all imaginable space; we produce only atoms, instead of the mighty realities, around us. We find a shore of infinite extent, whose centre is in every part,—its circumference in none!

"Behold, then, herein, the plainest proof of the omnipotence of Jehovah,—that our imagination is lost and overwhelmed in the contemplation of these His stupendous works!"

"What is Man in the scale of infinitude?" is the great question then deduced. And, after a description equally elaborate of the infinite in the minuteness of Creation, the enquiry is resumed. "Again, I ask, what is man in the midst of nature? He is nothing in comparison with infinitude; he is everything in comparison with nullity: he is a central point between nothing and everything. Their extremes being infinitely beyond his comprehension, the finality and the first principle of things are concealed from his view under an impenetrable mystery; and he is equally incapable of searching into the nonentity from which he was derived, and the infinitude into which he is absorbed."

It is to these momentous problems that the subsequent portion of his treatise was designed by Pascal,

under Scriptural guidance, to furnish a yet more ample solution.

The foundations of sound faith and true consolation for man were, however, previously to be yet deeper laid. For this purpose, in the ensuing section, his "*Greatness*" and his "*Misery*" are unfolded;—the one to show the lofty purposes of his creation; the other, to urge him to seek the only true remedy for his sorrows. The vanity of worldly pursuits; our eager desire of the praise of our fellows; the transitoriness of all that we most greedily covet, and fondly cherish;—these are depicted with touching eloquence, and a philosophic reach of conception. "*Thought*" is declared,—and who knew it better than Pascal?—to be "the distinctive endowment and the high prerogative of Man." "Let us aim to think *well*," is his injunction; "for that is the source of all true morality." The great axiom is then laid down, that "Happiness . . is to be found, not in ourselves, not in any created objects, but in God alone." "If man is not formed for God," it is enquired, "why is he only happy when united to God?" And it is thus that he sums up the whole matter:—"Let Man hold himself at his true worth. Let him regard himself with complacency, in possessing a nature capable of good; with aversion, on account of the unworthiness mingled with it. Let him despise himself for the abortiveness of his powers; but moderate his contempt in consideration of their original greatness . . . He is capable of knowing truth, and attaining to happiness; but he possesses neither truth, constancy, nor peace."

Under the same general division of topics in which

the preceding sections are embraced, a review is next taken of the various systems of philosophy; and the doctrines of the Stoics, Atheists, Pyrrhonists, of ancient times, (and of modern days also, although bearing different names,) are successively challenged and scrutinized.

He takes a comprehensive view of the schemes by which mankind have been in all times deluded with the belief, that they could attain to wisdom, virtue, or enjoyment, by their unassisted efforts. All are shown to be vain and abortive; and both teachers and disciples to be alike wandering in a mist of self-sufficiency and error; intoxicated with the fumes of intellectual pride, or wallowing in the sloughs of hopeless sensuality; "having no hope," and living "without God in the world."

"See then," is at length his thrilling exclamation; "see, then, the mystery of man! What a being of crudities!—what a monster, a chaos!—what a compound of contradictions,—a prodigy! The master of all knowledge,—an abject worm of the earth; the depositary of truth,—the sink of uncertainty and doubt: behold him, at once the glory and the opprobrium of the universe! How is this entanglement to be unravelled? Nature confounds the sceptic; and reason, the dogmatist. Where, O man, shall end all your vain researches into your real condition by the force of natural reason only? . . . . Learn then, O proud being, the paradox which you constitute! Humble yourself, vain reason! Be silent, weak nature! Know how man infinitely surpasses man; receive from your Great Master that secret of your true condition of which you are so ignorant!—Listen to the words of God!"

It is by this, and a train of similar reasoning, that we are prepared for the second division of our author's topics, comprised under the title, "*Happiness of man with God, or a remedy furnished by Revelation.*" This is opened, like the former, by some prefatory remarks.

With the logical precision which was one of Pascal's especial characteristics, he clears the way for the reception of revealed religion, by showing the weakness and inadequacy of that which is designated as *natural.* He thus explicitly lays down his position at the outset:—"I marvel at the boldness with which these persons presume to express themselves respecting the Deity, in their addresses to the unbelieving. Their first and great point is, to prove a God by the works of nature." . . . . "As to those," he proceeds, "in whom this (the divine) illumination is extinguished, and in whom yet it is wished to revive its guiding fires,—persons destitute both of faith and grace,—who, making every effort to explore amidst the works of nature something which may direct them to the knowledge of a God, find therein, nevertheless, nothing but clouds and darkness;—to tell such persons that they have but to contemplate the simplest of the objects around them, and they will plainly discover in them a Divine hand; to refer them, for proofs on this grand and momentous theme, to the revolutions of the moon or the planets; and then to fancy that the sum of the evidences on which their belief is to rest is completed;—all this is only calculated, as reason and experience have both taught me, to awaken a suspicion that the proofs by which our religion is supported are

miserably weak; and, instead of impressing reverence for her high revelations, tends rather to bring them into contempt."

He then contrasts with this unsatisfying system the sacred instructions which the Scriptures of truth furnish to man; and lays down the principle upon which he means to proceed in urging their claims upon the understanding and the conscience. "Therefore it is," he declares, "that I undertake not here to prove, from natural causes, the existence of God, or the doctrine of the Trinity, or the immortality of the soul, or any other matters of the like kind: not only because I should not think it practicable to find in the works of nature proofs sufficient to convince the hardened Atheist; but because, if I were so capable, the knowledge thus furnished, without a knowledge of Christ, would be barren and useless."

By the chain of reasoning which is here endeavoured to be traced, we find ourselves prepared for the Master-proposition that now claims our attention. Infidelity and indifference to religion had been attacked in their strong-holds. The deadening effects of excessive occupation, and dissipating amusements, had been illustrated: the deceptive influences which beset reason and judgment on every side, exposed; self-love dissected; the regions of imagination surveyed and mapped out. The greatness of the human powers had been displayed, by one well able to form the estimate of them; and man's hopeless misery, without aid and illumination from above, mournfully enforced. The systems of heathen and atheistic philosophy had been examined, and their

futility proclaimed. Then the great truth is laid down, "That man without FAITH can know neither happiness nor rectitude." Quotation would here be endless; but the opening and concluding passages,—the one which, after describing the vain search in which man is unceasingly engaged for happiness, concludes with the axiom, that "God *alone* is man's true good;" and the other, which proclaims the "Christian religion to be the remedy for all the ills under which man suffers;" . . . . . "elevating the just to a participation of the divine nature itself;" . . . . and announcing "to the most debased of the human race that it is yet in their power to become partakers of their Redeemer's grace;"—these, with many others, in this striking section, are of a nature to commend themselves to every mind possessed of taste and feeling.

In the next chapter are described the "*Characteristics of True Religion.*" Such a religion is hypothetically portrayed as "teaching our duties; revealing our impotency, pride, and sensuality; and enforcing the remedies—humility and mortification." "What religion, but Christianity," it is asked, "exhibits such a knowledge as this?" "A true religion," we are again told, "ought to be one that adores and loves no other being than God. Yet, seeing we are incapable of worshipping a being with whom we are not acquainted, and of loving any but ourselves, a religion which instructs us in our duties, should also inform us of our inability to perform them, and provide us with a remedy for such inability. Our religion does, in fact, reveal to us, that by man we have lost everything; that the union

between God and ourselves has been broken; and that by MAN also this union has been renewed." "Christianity enjoins upon man to acknowledge himself vile—yea, abominable; yet commands him to aspire to a likeness to God!" "Without such a counterpoise, his elevation would render him fearfully vain, or his abasement hopelessly abject." "The Incarnation shows man the greatness of his misery in the greatness of the remedy that is demanded." These are some of the impressive passages in which our religion is described, and its principles honoured; and, in conclusion, the listening disciple is apostrophized, in a personification of the august Wisdom of God, in the following solemn terms:—"Expect not either truth or consolation from man. It is I who formed you; and I alone can instruct you what and whence you are. You are not now in the state in which you were first created. I made man holy, innocent, perfect; filled him with light and intelligence; communicated to him of the glories of my nature, and the wonders of my works. His eye then gazed on the unveiled majesty of God. The shades and darkness in which he is now enveloped had not gathered round him; suffering was unknown; and the solemn sentence of mortality had not gone forth. But the excess of his glory hurled him into presumption. He aimed to be the centre to himself, and to be independent of ME. He revolted from my sway, and sought to rival me in becoming the source of his own felicity. Then I abandoned him to himself; and, rousing all the creatures heretofore submitted to his authority into revolt against him, from his willing subjects they became his enemies!"

The "*Means of Attaining to Faith*," form the next division. The leading feature in this chapter is that species of wager—interlocution, which has been elsewhere already made the subject of remark; and it is now for the first time published in perfect conformity with the original MS. The personal reference with which this supposed dialogue concludes, forms one of the most touching passages in Pascal's writings. "If this discourse pleases and convinces you," he says, "know that it proceeds from a man who did, before its commencement, and will, after its close, bend his knees before the Infinite and Unseen, to whom he is wont to submit all his desires, that He may incline your will in such way as will most conduce to your good and to his glory; and that thus his power may harmonize with your abasement."

The limits of this introductory paper almost preclude more than an enumeration of the remaining topics of this volume. The chapters on the "Jewish Nation," "Miracles," "The Figurative Parts of Scripture," and on "Prophecy," all show the writer's deep study of the book of inspiration, and his fondness for wandering amidst the confines of revealed truth, while they harmonize in the one great object of informing and convincing the enquirer after divine instruction. In the subsequent chapter, devoted to reflections upon the person and offices of the Saviour, his hearty recognition is recorded of the Divinity of His nature, and of that great work which he descended upon earth to fulfil,—the salvation of man, by his expiatory sufferings; and the immortality of glory, procured for him through the resurrection. In

the beautiful meditations, also, which are appended to this section, the holiness, purity, compassion, and sorrows of the Redeemer, are delineated with a richness and pathos which scarcely find a parallel even in the productions of his own pen.

The completion of the argument, and its practical application, will be found in the concluding chapter, "*On the Christian Religion.*" Having shown how deeply the necessity for this divine system is laid in the nature and the wants of man; in the abjectness of his fall, and the yet unextinguished aspirations of his spirit; having proved its unspeakable superiority over all human religions; and established its truth from type, prophecy, and miracle; he proceeds to unfold its internal excellencies, and its claims upon the grateful reception of mankind. In Pascal's delineation — and the colouring may be heightened from innumerable kindred pencils—Christianity is shown to be the origin of all that is refined, beneficent, and elevated in humanity; of whatever is gracious in motive, pure in spirit, generous in sentiment, lofty in enthusiasm, and bold in enterprise. From it, as from a copious fountain, flow the finest courtesies, the gentlest charities, and the most expansive philanthropy of life. It is the spring, yet the regulator, of true freedom; the inspirer of the highest intellectual efforts; and the foundation of all social and national good. Its poetry is nobler, and its philosophy deeper, than any that went before;—for both are conversant with greater subjects, and touch far higher interests. Christian principle it is which sends its votaries, without distinction of age, sex, or station, upon its errands of mercy,

and enlists all classes, from the highest to the lowest, in its services of love. It alone sustains the martyr in his flames, and sends forth the lonely Missionary to his labours armed with more than a martyr's fortitude. It alleviates every evil that afflicts society, and aims to heal all the sorrows under which humanity groans. Hospitals (unknown in heathen times) are, by its energies, erected with a stateliness which rivals the habitations of princes; asylums are provided for destitution and old age; colleges, schools, churches, are sown thick over every land. Through its genial cares the blind receive their sight, the deaf hear, the lame walk; the orphan finds a parentage more provident often than that of which death has deprived him; idiotcy is taught the smile of grateful intelligence; and the raving maniac is soothed into reason and peace. —"The Christian," says Pascal, "loves his neighbour; yet his charity does not limit itself to him, but extends to his enemies, and even to the enemies of God."— Christianity also lightens every grief of the individual bosom, and enhances every lawful earthly satisfaction; while it opens to the view prospects of ineffable joy in a boundless eternity. Where would end the enumeration of the benefits of this heaven-bestowed and heaven-implanted scheme? Well might our author exclaim, "Christianity is a system of wonders!" "There is no happiness, no rationality, no virtue, no gracefulness, like the true Christian's! With how little elation of spirit does he believe himself to be in a state of union with God! With how little of abjectness does he level himself with a worm of the dust! How beautifully do we see him welcome life and death, happiness and suffering!"

I have considered that this series would be not inappropriately closed by the two papers which follow, and complete the volume;—the one, the essay "On the Conversion of the Sinner;" the other, the "Prayer, (or Meditation,) for the Improvement of Sickness." These compositions are well known to the readers of Pascal; but they are now, like most of the other pieces, published in a more authentic form than heretofore. Though written at a comparatively early age, and, as is believed, not long after his mind had been first awakened to religion, they show that his piety, like all his endowments, had rapidly attained to a maturity which is rarely found in the most advanced stages of Christian experience. In the former treatise we find portrayed, with a fidelity which nothing but the secrets of his own bosom could have supplied, the commencement and development of the divine life; its remorse for the unimproved past, its astonishment at surrounding insensibility to religion, and its solemn vows and pious devotedness for the time to come. In the other, we have the touching records of the convert's communion with his God and Saviour. In the bloom of early manhood, we see him prostrated at the foot of the Eternal, absorbed in holy contemplation of the divine character, and labouring to express his own humiliation in the view of Infinite perfection. While life, with no common attractiveness, was opening before his view, we hear him exulting in that mighty change which had roused his conscience against former pursuits and indulgences; and welcoming those sufferings which were thenceforth to shut him out from much even of innocent enjoyment.

The chosen son of philosophy and learning, he tramples the rewards of ambition and fame beneath his feet; and, while courted by the eminent and the noble, he desires no distinctions but those of holiness and philanthropy. He asks to have no will but that of Heaven; sees nothing worthy of desire but eternity; and aims for the time to come, only to devote his high powers and brilliant endowments to the service of his God, and the welfare of his fellow-men.

It is now time that the reader should be released from these preliminary remarks. The office I have undertaken is completed: yet I might, perhaps, acknowledge a feeling not wholly unmixed with regret, at concluding the retrospect of pages so largely fraught with beauty and wisdom, as those which I have ventured to bring before the public eye. In times of much unsettled opinion, and many conflicting systems, it is indeed refreshing to place ourselves under the teaching of a writer, whose theology is alike pure, elevated, and scriptural. Pascal's inspirations were drawn fresh from the fountains of immutable truth; and *its* unerring revelations formed the impregnable barriers of his faith. Nothing in his mind was uncertain, undefined, or evasive. His religion was the product of clear, though profound, thought. His polemics were as logical as his philosophy was sound. He gave no qualified or grudging assent to the testimony of inspiration: he entered into no compromises with the plausibilities of mere human reason, or the sophistries of covert infidelity. His delight was to humble his large intellect before the infinite wisdom of

God; and while his powers of reasoning placed him among the foremost proficients in the exact sciences, he welcomed the unexplained dictates of Heaven with the simple trust of a child. This it is which forms the crowning virtue of his intellectual eminence; and this will insure immortality to his writings, when the glittering but shallow effusions of unchastised genius, and reasoning pride, will have fallen into deserved oblivion.

On these grounds, among others, it is, that I am especially desirous that these volumes should prove acceptable to the younger class of readers. Amply, indeed, would the pains bestowed upon the preparation of this Work be compensated if, in those less advanced members of our faith, it should, in any measure, contribute to strengthen pure religious principle, while increasing the taste for graceful composition, and robust and elevated thought.

It needs only to be added, that, while in the translation of the present volume — impressed with the weight and importance of the subjects—I have taken, if possible, more pains than before, to represent, with all the fidelity in my power, the exact sentiments of the original, the critical reader may possibly discover a considerable measure of amplification in the rendering of some portion of the text. This has partly arisen from the large number of passages collected from original MSS., which, though valuable in themselves, bear often an abrupt and unfinished character; and these peculiarities have demanded, in order to render them inoffensive to a native ear, almost a paraphrase rather than a translation. My aim has been, as has been remarked elsewhere, throughout this work, as far

as my ability enabled me, to give to a classic of a high order in French literature, the place to which he is entitled among our own standard writings. And in doing so, I have hoped in some measure to show that there are few delicacies of phrase, and few heights of oratory, in this master of language, which cannot find some answer and equivalent in our own rich and beautiful tongue.

*** It will be remembered that in this, as in the preceding volumes, the passages marked thus + are from original Manuscripts; and, also, that all the Notes, not otherwise designated, are those of the French Editor, or his predecessors.

Title-pages to the present and two preceding volumes, comprising the Works of Pascal, with the exception of Scientific Treatises, will be found at the end of this volume.

FRAGMENTS

OF AN

APOLOGY FOR CHRISTIANITY:

OR,

THOUGHTS

ON RELIGION.

GENERAL PREFACE.

EDITORIAL NOTICE.

THESE preliminary reflections, which bear the evident character of a general preface, were, in the edition of 1670, entitled, "Upon the indifference of Atheists:" they retained that title in the subsequent editions, up to that of Condorcet, in which they were headed, "On the necessity of investigating the proofs of the existence of a future state." In the edition of Bossut, and those that followed it, they were entitled, "On the necessity of studying religion."

Pascal himself affixed no title to these reflections, which were evidently left by him in a less complete state than he had intended.*

It should be further stated that the fragment is not to be found in the Autograph MS.; but it has been preserved in the two copies of the same MS. It is from the text of both these MSS. that we now reproduce this fragment, which has undergone very essential alterations in the preceding editions.

There will be found at the close a very important variation, never before fully furnished, and of which, indeed, a few lines only, and those out of their proper place, have appeared in former copies. Lastly, we have affixed various notes, which have been discovered, partly in the Autograph MS., partly in the copy, and which Pascal had evidently written to accompany this general preface.

The mark +, as has been before remarked in reference to the "Miscellaneous Writings," indicates the paragraphs, sentences, or parts of sentences, and titles, which are published now for the first time.

This remark applies to the *whole* of this volume.

As to the corrections of the text, which in this, as well as the preceding volume, are innumerable, we leave them to the curiosity of such readers as may feel an interest in tracing them.

(French Editor.)

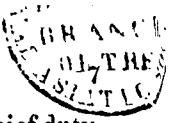
* See Note at page 14.

GENERAL PREFACE.

THOSE who set themselves up as opponents to religion should at least know what it is that they oppose. If this religion boasted of having attained to a perfect discovery of God,—of knowing him plainly, and piercing thoroughly the veil of his perfections,—it might be an answer to say, that we see nothing in this world which reveals Him with so much distinctness. But since the religion in question, on the contrary, declares that man is surrounded by darkness, and estranged from God; that the Infinite is shrouded from their search; that the very name he gives himself, in his own word, is *Deus absconditus*, "a God who hideth himself;" and, lastly, since it aims equally to establish these two things,—that God has, in his Church, laid down certain marks by which he can be known of all who seek him sincerely; and yet that he so conceals himself, as to be undiscoverable to all but those who thus seek him with sincerity of heart;—what does it avail these persons to allege, while thus avowedly neglecting the means of discovering truth, that they can find nothing that reveals their Maker to them; since the very obscurity in which they are involved, and which they charge as a fault upon the Church, has only the effect of establishing the one of these positions which she herself has laid down, without affecting the other; and confirms, instead of invalidating, her evidences?

To maintain their cavils successfully, they ought to be able to show, that they have used every means in their power, especially such as the Church herself provides for them, to discover God aright, but without success. Were this the fact, they might indeed succeed in shaking the Truth in her very strongest positions. But I hope to be able to demonstrate, that there are none who can justifiably hold this language; and I venture to affirm, that there is not the man living, nor ever was such, who has acted in the manner I have described. Who does not know in what way the persons we are referring to proceed? They think they have made great efforts to inform themselves aright, in giving a few hours to the reading of some portions of Holy Scripture, and perhaps interrogating an ecclesiastic upon the doctrines of the Faith. After that, they announce that they have explored the truth without success, in books, and among men. But, in truth, I cannot help telling them—and I have often said the same thing before—that such negligence is utterly inexcusable. The question at issue is nothing trifling in itself, or interesting only to others, that it should be dealt with in this manner: it is one which concerns ourselves, and all that is dear—all that is vital to us!

The immortality of the soul is a matter so important and so interesting to man, that he must be lost to all feeling who can be unconcerned whether it be a truth or not. All our sentiments, and all our actions, must take such different directions, according as they are founded in the hope of eternal happiness or not, that it is impossible to pursue any course of conduct with sense and judgment, except as it is regulated by this as an ultimate object.



Thus, then, our first interest, as well as our chief duty, is to obtain clear views upon this great point, upon which all our procedure is dependent. And therefore it is, that among those who are unconvinced of the truth, I make a wide distinction between such as use every endeavour to attain to conviction, and others, who pass their lives in indolence and unconcern upon the subject.

I cannot but feel compassion for those who mourn in sincerity under their doubts; who look upon them as their sorest calamity; and who, sparing no labour to remove them, make the effort to do so their chief and most serious occupation.

But as to those who trifle away their existence, without bestowing any thought upon this great question of its mode of termination; and who, merely because they find no light within their own minds to guide them, neglect to search for instruction beyond themselves; who care not to investigate whether the opinions in question are such as are imbibed by the commonalty with a credulous simplicity, or such as, although difficult in themselves, yet rest upon a solid and impregnable foundation;—of such persons as these, I entertain a very different opinion.

Negligence such as this, in a matter which concerns themselves,—their eternal interests, their all,—excites my indignation rather than my pity; it astonishes and shocks me; it is unnatural and monstrous! In saying this, I am not carried away by pious zeal, or devout excitement. My opinion is formed upon the mere principle of worldly interest and self-love: to confirm it, we have only to observe what is plain and obvious to the least enlightened among men. It requires not an understand-

ing of unwonted elevation to perceive, that *here* we enjoy no true and substantial satisfaction; that all our earthly pleasures are but vanity; that the troubles of life are innumerable; and that death, with whose invasion we are momentarily threatened, must in a few years inevitably bring to us the dreadful alternative of eternal annihilation or misery!*

There is nothing more absolutely true than this,—nothing more terrible! Put as brave a face upon it as you will, this is the end of the fairest life on earth!† Let us pause, then, at this point, and ask, if it be not unquestionable, that there is no real good in this life but what arises from the hope of another; that we are happy only in proportion as we approach near to that other; and that, as there remain no actual evils to those who have a full assurance of eternity, so there is no happiness for such as are destitute of its hopes? It is then, assuredly, a great evil to labour under these doubts; but it is at least our duty to seek the solution of them. He, therefore, who doubts, and yet investigates not, is both unhappy and perverse. If, in such a state, he can be contented and tranquil, as he pretends; if he yields himself up to ignorance, and derives from that ignorance enjoyment;—

* It will not escape notice, that when Pascal speaks of an *alternative* of annihilation or misery, he evidently refers to the sentiments of the worldly mind, which he had before described,—that of the least enlightened of men, "the understanding of no unwonted elevation." None knew better than himself that *no* such alternative actually existed. (Transl.)

† Pascal has expressed in another place, and apparently under the form of a personal and isolated reflection, the considerations which he here puts in the mouth of the opponents of religion. See among the "Miscellaneous Thoughts," that commencing, "When I consider the brief term of my earthly existence," and the other, "Why is my knowledge thus limited?" &c. Nos. 152 and 153, pp. 237, 238.

then I want terms to designate so infatuated a being! Where learned he such sentiments? Whence does he derive his satisfaction, in thus witnessing misery without a remedy? What matter for vanity is this, to feel himself surrounded on all sides with impenetrable darkness? Do such reflections as these befit a man pretending to reason? "I know not," will such an one say, "who placed me in the world, or what is the world, or what I am myself! I am fearfully ignorant of all things: I know not what is my body,—what my senses,—what my soul: and that very part of me which thinks that which I am now uttering, and which reflects upon every thing, and upon itself also, is as ignorant of itself as of every thing besides! I perceive myself surrounded with the awful infinitudes of the universe, and placed upon a single point in its vast surface, unknowing why I am *there* rather than elsewhere, or why the petty period assigned for my existence has been fixed at this moment rather than any other, amidst the entire Eternity that has preceded, and that which is to follow!

"I see infinitudes on every side of me, which enclose me in their recesses as a mere atom,—as a shadow, which appears but for a moment, and returns no more.

"All that I know is, that I am shortly to *die*; yet what I am most ignorant of, is that very death which I am unable to avoid.

"As I know not whence I came, so I know not where I am going; and I only know that, on quitting this world, I shall fall for ever, either into annihilation, or into the hands of an angry God, without knowing of which of these states I am to be an eternal partaker.

"This is my condition:—full of misery, of weakness,

of ignorance! And the conclusion I arrive at from these things is, that I ought to pass all the days of such a life without reflecting or inquiring what is to befall me after it! I might, indeed, discover some satisfaction for my doubts; but I will not give myself the trouble to do so, nor even take any steps for the purpose: and, despising those who give themselves up to such labours, I shall, without precaution or solicitude, take my chance of the great event, and quietly await the approach of death, in utter uncertainty of my lot in the never-ending ages of eternity."

+ Who would desire for his friend the man that thus acted? Who would select him as the confidant of his affairs? Who resort to him for solace in his afflictions?

+ And what, again, is the end and object which such a person proposes to himself in his earthly existence?

It is, in truth, the triumph of Religion, that she encounters such irrational opponents; and so little danger is there in their hostility, that it tends rather to the confirmation of her great realities. For the Christian faith goes mainly to the establishment of these two things, —the corruption of man's nature, and his redemption by Jesus Christ. If these persons, then, cannot be said to exhibit the truth of redemption by the sincerity of their conduct, they serve admirably to prove the *corruption* of nature, by the profligacy of their sentiments.

Nothing is so important to man as his spiritual state; no interest is to him so tremendous as Eternity. Thus, to see men unconcerned about their salvation, and the peril of everlasting misery, is something wholly unnatural. It is otherwise with them as to all other things:

their fears, their precautions, their sensibility, are excited by the merest trifles of earth; and the man who will pass days and nights in excitement and desperation for the loss of a place, or under some imaginary offence to his honour, is he who, in the knowledge that death must put an end to all these things, awaits its approach without uneasiness or emotion! Is it not monstrous to see in the same heart, and at the same instant, sensibility so acute to the merest trifles, and an utter indifference to the most momentous interests?

It is surely a delusion beyond comparison, it is a supineness utterly out of nature; +and indicates the hidden force of some mysterious and all-powerful agent!

Must there not be some strange revulsion in the nature of man, that he should thus glory in a condition in which it might seem incredible that a human being could be found to exist?

Yet does experience show me the number of such to be so great, that this again would excite astonishment, did we not know that the larger part of such persons do but *counterfeit* their belief, and are not, in reality, what they pretend to be. They are, in fact, people who fancy that *good taste*, according to the notions of the world, consists in such profane sallies. It is what they call throwing off old-fashioned prejudices, and weak scruples. Yet it would not be difficult to show how they deceive themselves in seeking reputation in this manner. It is not the best way to recommend themselves—I would even say—with the persons of the world; who are apt to judge shrewdly of things, and who feel that the only means for their fellow-men to gain their good opinion is,

to show themselves upright, faithful, judicious,—capable of friendship, and apt to good offices; because we naturally like such as can be useful to ourselves. Now what advantage is it to us to hear another say, he has thrown off the yoke of conscience; he has no belief in a God who takes cognizance of his conduct; he is the only master of his own actions, and expects to render account of them to none but himself? Does such a man think to induce us, by these avowals, to place the more confidence in him; or to seek at his hand the consolations, the counsel, or the aid, which we need in the varying events of life? Does he think it can be any satisfaction to us to be told, he considers the soul to be a mere *breath* or *vapour;* and this too with an air of dogmatism and self-satisfaction? Is such a tenet as this, then, one to be pronounced with hilarity and joy; and not rather with the deepest sorrow, as an article of belief of all others the most affecting and mournful?

If such persons were to reflect sincerely, they would see that their conduct is so injudicious, so contrary to good sense, so opposed to sound principle, and in every way so little conducive to that good opinion on the part of others which they desire to cultivate; that it is rather calculated to repel from them, than to corrupt those who might be under any temptation to become their followers. And, in reality, set them but to give some account of their reasons for denying the evidence of religion, you will find them so weak and poor, that they will bring you to the very opposite of their conclusions. This was what was once happily said to one of these persons,—"If you continue such discourse as this much

longer, you will entirely convert me to piety." And he was right: for who would not dread to have for his companions persons holding sentiments so flagitious?

Thus, such as make a mere pretence of these opinions are doubly unhappy, in masking their real views, in order to render themselves the most contemptible of men. If they are in their inmost feelings concerned at not being better informed, let them not disguise it; the confession will entail upon them no disgrace. The only shame is to be *without* shame. Nothing shows more an utter abjectness of spirit, than to be ignorant of man's unhappiness without a God; nothing proves more malignancy of heart, than not to desire the truth of eternal rewards; no cowardice is greater, than to affect hardihood against God! Let such impieties as these be left to those who are so unhappily constituted as to be really capable of harbouring them. Be at least honest, if you cannot be Christians; and confess that there are but two classes of persons who can properly be called rational,—those who serve God from the heart, because they know him; and those who seek him with all their heart, yet cannot find him.

But for those who live without knowing and without seeking him, they show themselves so indifferent to their own welfare, that they are little deserving of the solicitude of others; and it requires all the charity which is inspired by the religion they despise, not so far to despise their folly as to abandon them to its consequences. But, as that religion compels us ever to regard such persons, during their earthly existence, as capable of receiving its illuminating grace; and to

believe it to be possible that such as these even may, by its omnipotent influences, become stronger in the faith than ourselves; while we, on the other hand, might be left to fall into the same lamentable darkness as themselves; we ought to do for them what we should desire them to do for us in their place; and entreat them to have pity upon themselves, and at least use some endeavours to attain to a better state of mind. Let them give to this treatise a few of those hours which they employ so unprofitably upon other objects: repugnant as it may be to them, it may chance that they may find in it some things for which they will not deem their labour thrown away. But as to such others as will bring to its perusal sincerity of purpose, and a real desire to discover truth, I trust they will find in it the satisfaction they seek, and be convinced of the divinity of our religion, by the evidences which they will find here brought together; and in which I have in a general way adopted the following arrangement.*

* Pascal did not revise the latter part of this introductory paper; at least the MSS. furnish only some isolated and imperfect notes of that portion. We have collected these at the end of the present volume, under the title of "Order," which he himself has given to it in several places.

After the above, there occurs in the copy another fragment which is not a sequel, but evidently intended as a variation of the former. Pascal appears to have revised the first portion of the preface as far as the paragraph beginning "I know not." These words, which end the revised part, show that he would have retained in its present state the close of the preface.

We furnish here the second revision, leaving it to the reader's own conjecture, which of the two is the one which this great writer would have finally adopted: his choice seems to have remained undetermined, inasmuch as he has not struck out either of the fragments.

VARIATION OF THE GENERAL PREFACE.

† BEFORE entering upon the proofs of the Christian religion, I think it necessary to show the unreasonableness of those persons, who pass their lives in indifference to the truth of a matter, so important in itself, and which interests them so deeply.

† Of all the extravagancies of these men, this is indisputably the one which is most conclusive of their folly and blindness, and the most easy to expose on the simplest principles of common sense and sentiment of nature. It is not to be questioned, that the duration of our present life is but as an instant; that death—come how or when it will—brings it to an eternal close; and that thus, all our sentiments and our actions ought to pursue a course so different, according to our views of the eternal state, that it is impossible to take a single step in life with sense or judgment, excepting as it is regulated by our expectations upon this one great and final question.

† Nothing can be more evident than this; and therefore, upon the mere principle of reason, any other line of conduct in men is utterly unreasonable. Let those then be judged by this rule, who live on without bestowing a thought upon the termination of life, who give the loose to their inclinations and passions, without reflection and solicitude; and, as if they had it in their

power to annihilate the eternity in prospect, by turning away from it their thoughts, propose to themselves no aim or object but the fleeting pleasure of a moment.

Yet is this eternity real and substantive; and death, which opens the door to it, and which impends over them during every instant of existence, must infallibly place these men in the dreadful alternative of falling into either everlasting annihilation, or suffering; while they remain in utter ignorance as to which of these awful states shall await them.

This, then, is an uncertainty of tremendous moment. † They stand exposed to the danger of an eternity of misery; and, yet, as if the matter were undeserving the slightest pains or trouble, they neglect to examine whether the opinion in question be one of those which are received with a facile credulity, or one which, though wrapt in mystery, rests on a solid, if an obscure, foundation. Thus are they contented to be uninformed upon a point like this, whether it be true or false, whether there be strength or weakness in its evidences. These evidences are before their eyes, yet they refuse to look at them; and, in this state of ignorance, they take the determination to do all in their power to entail upon themselves these horrors, if they have any existence, till death shall solve for them the problem; yet to abide contented and in peace in such a state, and to turn the whole matter into complacency and boast! Is it possible to contemplate such conduct without amazement and dismay?

This tranquillity in the midst of such ignorance, is a thing utterly out of nature; and the extravagance and

infatuation of those that can pass a life in such a state, must be held up to them, till they feel confounded at their folly. For this is the sort of reasoning of these men, when they form this resolution to remain in ignorance of what they are, and yet renounce all effort to obtain information: "I know not," they say . . . . . .*

NOTES

TO THE PRECEDING GENERAL PREFACE.†

If man knows not himself to be full of pride, ambition, concupiscence, weakness, misery, and injustice, he is wretchedly blind. And if, knowing all this, he does not desire deliverance, what is to be said of such a man? . . .‡

Who but must admire a religion which comprehends so well man's defects; and who would not desire a religion to be true which offers such effectual remedies?

Suppose an heir who has just discovered the title-deeds of his property. Will he say, "Perhaps they are forged?" and will he take no pains to examine them?

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* See continuation, page 9.

† Several of these notes are struck through in the MS., probably because Pascal erased them as fast as the substance of them became incorporated in the text or revision. (French Editor.) They are retained here, with many other similar memoranda, as curious instances of the mental processes by which the writer elaborated his most finished productions. (Transl.)

‡ The Editors add the words, "so destitute of rationality," which are not in the MS.

Between us and hell or heaven, there is nothing but *life*, the most fragile thing in existence.

A man is in prison, not knowing whether sentence is passed; having but one hour to ascertain the fact:—that hour, notwithstanding, being sufficient, if the sentence have been passed, to procure its revocation.—Is it in nature that *he* should employ that hour, not in ascertaining whether the sentence is passed, but in playing at picquet?

+ So it is unnatural that man, &c.

+ It is an infliction from the hand of God.

Thus, not only does their zeal, who seek him, prove the existence of God, but the blindness also of those who seek him not.

+ Prison.

— I can excuse their not investigating the system of Copernicus, but this . . . . .

— It is vital to the whole of existence, to ascertain whether the soul is mortal or immortal.

We rush without apprehension upon a precipice, when we have placed something before it to hide it from our eyes.

See the weakness of reposing upon creatures such as ourselves! Miserable and impotent like us, they can afford us no support! We must die alone: we ought to live then as if we were alone: and should we, in that case, build stately mansions, &c.? We ought to seek truth without reserve; and if we refuse to do so, we show that we value the esteem of men more than the discovery of truth.

+ The sensibility of man respecting trifles, and his insensibility to things of importance, show a strange convulsion in his nature.

Religion is so important a thing, that it is right that those who will not take the trouble to investigate it, difficult as it is, should lose its advantages. What have they to complain of, if it really be what they could discover by searching for it?

I blame, in an equal measure, those who set themselves to flatter man, those who habitually censure him, and those whose aim is merely to amuse him. I can approve only such as search, though with sorrow, into his nature.

+ Should we complain of Atheists who investigate, for are they not sufficiently unhappy? Denounce rather those who turn their conduct into vanity.

+ We ought to pity both: but our pity for the one, should be that of tenderness; for the other, that of contempt. (Erased.)

— + We ought to be much imbued with the religion they despise, not to despise them. (Erased.)

— + That is not in good taste. (Erased.)

— + That proves that there is nothing more to be said to them; not out of contempt, but because they are destitute of common sense. It is God above who must teach them. (Erased.)

— + Persons of this description consist of academicians

and scholars; and they are the most perverse class of men that I am acquainted with. (Erased.)

— + You will convert me . . . . (Erased.)

— + I do not take that for extravagance, but for a proof of the way in which the human heart is constituted. (Erased.)

— + It is, then, not to be doubted, that there is no real goodness without a knowledge of God; that, in proportion as we advance in that knowledge, we are happy; and that the highest happiness is, to know him with certainty. On the other hand, in proportion as we are alienated from God, we are unhappy; and the greatest unhappiness is, the certainty of that alienation. (Erased.)

— It is, then, a misfortune to doubt; but it is an indispensable duty, when we are in doubt, to investigate. He, therefore, who doubts and investigates not, is at once unhappy and culpable. If, in addition, he is gay and conceited, I want terms to designate so extravagant a being! (Erased.)

— + Nevertheless, it is certain that man is so perverted, as to have in his inmost heart a feeling of satisfaction at this.

— + Is this, then, a thing to be spoken of with complacency? It should only inspire our sorrow. (Erased.)

— + Is it not enough, that he should work miracles on the very spot; and that Providence should manifest his interference on behalf of a people?

— + O worthy subject of exultation and boast, and to carry our head high in this fashion! Let us give ourselves up, then, to joy; let us live without fear or dis-

quiet, and wait the event with all its uncertainties, and we shall, at last, see what is to befall us: I cannot look into the results. (Erased.)

— Is it bravery in a man, to rush from life in his feebleness and sorrows, to confront a God omnipotent and eternal? (Erased.)

— + Happy should I be, were such a case mine, that my folly should excite pity, and benevolence be exerted to save me in spite of myself!

— + Fitting subject of joy, truly, to look forward to nothing but misery without remedy! O rich consolation, to despise every consoler! (Erased.)

— But those, even, who seem the most opposed to the glory of religion, will not altogether fail of doing her service on account of others.

We shall draw from it our first argument, that it has something of a superhuman character; for blindness of this description is not a natural thing: and if their folly puts them so in opposition to their real welfare, it will seem to fortify others by the horror of so deplorable an example, and a madness so deserving of compassion.

— + Are they so firm and insensible in regard to all other things? Try them with the loss of property or honours. Why, it is a delusion . . .

— + Good taste, then, consists in the absence of—true piety, in the possession of—benevolence towards others.

— + ... Not through mere devout zeal or religious abstraction, but on mere human principles, and through motives of interest and self-love. (Erased.)

The Notes which follow are only found in the copy. In the margin of the first paragraph is the following memorandum:—"This is in the roll commencing with the words, 'Let them know.'"

.... + Self-love; and because it is a thing which cannot but interest and affect us, to be assured that after all the ills of life, an inevitable death, which impends over us every instant, must in a few years . . . . in the dreadful necessity . . . . (Erased.)

— + The three conditions.

— + It must not be asserted that this is rational.

— + This is all that could be done by a man who was convinced of the falsehood of these statements; even then it should be a cause of dejection, rather than of joy.

— + Nothing is of importance but this; and this is neglected.

— Our imagination, by having present things incessantly before the mind, so magnifies their importance, and, in the same way, so diminishes the power of Eternity, by the want of reflection upon its realities, that we make Eternity a nothing, and nothings Eternity; and this propensity is so rooted in us, that all the force of reason avails not against it . . .

— + I would ask them whether they do not, themselves, establish the fundamental tenet of the faith they oppose, which is, the corruption of human nature.

— Imagine a number of men in chains, all under sentence of death, and a certain part of them each day executed before the eyes of the others. The survivors all see their own condition in that of their fellows, and look upon each other with sorrow and despair. Behold, herein, an image of the state of man!

FIRST PART.

MISERY OF MAN WITHOUT GOD:

OR,

NATURE CORRUPTED EVEN BY ITSELF.

THE preceding title, which denotes one of the divisions which Pascal proposed to introduce into his work, is found in the autograph MS., page 23. See end of the volume, article "Order." (*French Editor.*)

PREFACE

TO THE FIRST PART.*

† To enumerate the writers who have treated of self-knowledge; the minute and wearisome divisions of Charron; the confusedness of Montaigne,—that he was very sensible of his defect of method,† that he violated it by his habit of jauntily passing from one subject to another, that he aimed at an air of taste.

How silly his propensity to portray himself! and this not merely incidentally, and contrary to his intention, as may sometimes happen to every one, but systematically, prominently, and by design. To say

* This is the title given to the following paper by Pascal himself. It is plain, however, that the fragment is a mere note, indicating the manner in which he meant to fill up the sketch.

† "*Droit de méthode.*" The word "*droit*" is written legibly in the MS. The paper, however, is one of those dictated by Pascal to an inexperienced writer, and it cannot be certain that the expression is his. By "*Droit de méthode,*" does he mean that straight and regular line which method pursues, and which may thus produce monotony and weariness, like Charron? Or is it not, rather, defect of a "*droite méthode*" which Pascal intended? (French Editor.)

If these and a few other notes of the indefatigable French Editor should appear to the reader somewhat more curious than important, they will be easily excused as instances of that enthusiasm for his Author, of which the original volumes afford such abundant proof, and which has led him to preserve and investigate with microscopic exactness every sentence and word that fell from Pascal's pen. (Transl.)

foolish things through accident and infirmity is a common evil; but to put out such things with settled purpose, is intolerable, and that they should be such as . . . . . .

CHAPTER I.

AMUSEMENT.

EDITORIAL NOTICE.

We have collected in one chapter, under the title of "Amusement," various fragments dispersed throughout the autograph MS., and all of them having the same title prefixed. The larger number have been published in the successive editions of the "*Pensées*" under the title, "Misery of Man;" but with considerable alterations and interpolations, which are now rectified. An instance of this is furnished in the three first paragraphs which commenced the chapter on the "Misery of Man," in these editions, which are not to be found at all in the MS., or copies; besides that they are wholly unlike the style of Pascal.

The fragments on "Amusement," and some others connected with them, although they bear titles in the MS. somewhat different, were evidently intended to form portions of the first part of the Apology for Christianity, which proposed to treat of the Knowledge of Man. What, in fact, could better instruct us in the misery of his condition by nature, than this exhibition—so profoundly true, notwithstanding some exaggeration of colouring—of the need which all men experience of some species of diversion, in order to prevent their thoughts from settling too much upon themselves?

We have placed this chapter first, because it refers to the condition of humanity under its most general aspect. In those which follow, the subject is no longer man in a state of misery merely, as regards his humanity; but man's reason, considered in its relations, on the one side with the sources of error with which he has to contend, and, on the other, with those necessary limits which bound his capacity of comprehension and knowledge. (*French Editor.*)

AMUSEMENT.

[+] *Amusement.*

I. We burden men from infancy with the care of their honour, their property, their friends; and even with that of their friends' property and honour also. They are oppressed with business, and forced to drudge in languages and science; and are taught to believe that they can enjoy no happiness, unless their health, their honour, their fortune,—and that of their friends also,—are in a prosperous condition; and that the failure of any one of these things will impair their comfort. Thus they are brimful of occupation, and impelled to incessant labour, from morning to night. This is a strange way, you will say, of securing their happiness! What more could be done to render men unhappy? What could be done? say you. You have but to take from them all these cares; for then they would be obliged to look into *themselves:* then they would have to consider what they are, whence they came, whither they are going; and therefore it is, that they cannot have too much occupation and distraction of mind. And it is for this reason also, that, after providing these multifarious engagements, if any leisure is yet left for relaxation, men are recommended to employ it in

games and amusements; and thus to have their whole time completely filled up and absorbed.*

---

† *Amusement.*

II. When I have set myself sometimes to ruminate upon the various agitations in which men pass their lives, and the perils and toils to which they expose themselves, in courts or in war; whence arise so many conflicts, such clash of passions, such daring and often criminal enterprises; I have said to myself that all the misery of man springs from one source alone, which is, that he cannot endure to sit tranquilly at home, and be at rest. A man, having a sufficiency for his maintenance, if he could thus remain in quiet, would not go abroad, for adventures upon the ocean or the beleaguered field. † One person would not pay so high a price for a post in the army, were it not that he finds it insupportable to abide in his native town; and others would not seek the excitement of conversation, or play, but that they cannot remain without weariness in their own homes.

But when I pondered more deeply upon the matter, and, after observing the more obvious causes, endeavoured to discover the deeper reasons of these disquietudes among men, I found one paramount over all,—namely, the evil inseparable from our natural and mortal condition; which, when maturely considered, it will be found that nothing can effectually remedy.

Let us imagine to ourselves whatever state of life we may: collect around it all the advantages that can attach

* In the margin, "*Que le cœur de l'homme est creux et plein d'ordure.*"

to it,—be it even royalty itself, which is the highest condition that the world can offer. Suppose a Sovereign,* surrounded with all the satisfactions which his state can furnish: if he be unsupplied with amusements, and allowed time for reflection, and left to consider what he actually is, his felicity will languish and decay; and he will infallibly become a prey to anxious forebodings of the vicissitudes that may befall him, of the infirmities to which he is liable; and, yet more, of that death, which must sooner or later be encountered. Thus, if he be without what are called amusements, he will be unhappy,—even more unhappy than the lowest of his subjects, who are able to dissipate time and thought by diversions.

Thence it arises that gaming, amusing conversation, (especially that of the female sex,) war, and high offices, are so universally sought after. It is not that happiness is really to be found in these things,—that any one supposes there is any actual felicity conferred by the money he wins by gambling, or the hare that he courses in the field. Men would refuse these things if offered them as a simple gift. It is no such quiet and sluggish emotions as these that are sought,—leaving us still leisure to reflect upon our natural infelicity; nor is it the danger incident to war, nor the labours of office; but it is the excitement that these things occasion, which tends to divert the mind, and turn it from disquieting reflections.†

This is the reason why men are so enamoured of bustle

* These words, "*un Roi*," are not in the MS.

† In the margin of this place is written, "Reasons why persons are fonder of the chase than of the game."

and movement: hence it is, that the prison presents to the mind such terrors: hence, that the pleasures of solitude are so incomprehensible. † And it is, in fact, the main source of felicity in the condition of princes, that those about them are incessantly employed for their amusement, and busied to procure them variety in their pleasures.

† Kings are surrounded with persons whose occupation it is to divert them, and to dissipate thought. There is not a Sovereign living who can be otherwise than unhappy, if he *think*.*

This, then, is the sum of all that man has been able to devise for his own happiness. And those who philosophize upon the matter, and declaim upon the irrationality of people passing a whole day in chasing a hare, which they would not have deemed worth buying in the market, know nothing of human nature. The hare furnishes us with no refuge from thoughts of misery and death, but the chase of it does so. And thus, when persons are reproached for seeking with so much ardour what can yield no satisfaction, if they were to reply, as they might do did they consider the point aright,—that they seek only in it a violent and impetuous occupation which may divert their thoughts from themselves, and that they find in this an amusement irresistibly attractive and exciting,—they would leave their objectors without reply.† But they do not allege such reasons as these, because they are unconscious of their force themselves: they are not aware of the secret, that it is the chase, and

* This consideration is resumed and further developed subsequently.

† In the margin stands, "Dancing.....We must consider where we step."

not the possession of the game, by which they are attracted.*

One person imagines that if he could gain such a post, he should settle down in content; and does not suspect the insatiableness of worldly desires. Men fancy they are seeking repose, and, in reality, are seeking only agitation.

They have a secret instinct, urging them to occupation and amusement in external objects, which is the effect of a perpetual feeling of unhappiness; and they have another secret instinct,—the remains of our primitive greatness by nature,—which tells them that happiness is the fruit of repose, rather than of excitement. From these two opposing impulses results a confusion of purpose, which is concealed in the deep recesses of the spirit; prompting men to seek repose by means of agitation; and suggesting, that the hitherto unfound satisfaction will yet be discovered, if, after a few intervening difficulties shall have been surmounted, they can but succeed in reaching through them the haven of repose.

In this way it is that the whole of life is spent. Repose is sought by the mastery of obstacles; and when these are mastered, the repose becomes oppressive. The mind then falls back upon the ills which are actually felt, or those which are threatened. And if immunity from all these were really experienced, *Ennui* would force its secret entrances† into the spirit, and pervade and envenom it in every part.

* In the margin:—"The aristocrat really believes that the chase is a high and royal amusement; but his prompter does not think so."

† "*Et de son authorité privée, à ceste heure le chagrin prédomine en moy; à ceste heure l'allégresse.*"—Montaigne's Essays, Book ii., chap. 12.

The counsel given to Pyrrhus, to take at once that rest which he was about to seek through so many labours, would, in general, meet with little attention.

† So unhappily, therefore, is man constituted, that, by the very nature of his mind, he falls into weariness without any assignable cause; and such is his frivolity, that, with a thousand real causes of weariness, the merest trifle—a billiard-table or a ball—suffices to divert him.

But you will ask, What object does he propose to himself? Simply to be able to boast to-morrow among his friends, that he played better than his antagonist. In like manner, others toil in their closets to exhibit to the scientific the solution of some algebraical problem, never before discovered; and others again expose themselves to extremities of peril,—and, I think, with as little rationality,—in order to boast of a battle gained, or a fortification taken. And, further, there are some who destroy their lives in acquiring the knowledge of all these things,—not in order to become really more wise, but only to show to others that they know them. And these are the most foolish of the whole; because they have intelligence enough to avoid such follies, while the others fall into them through mere want of understanding.

One man passes his time without weariness, by playing for small stakes. Give the person every morning the sum which he might gain in the day, on condition that he does not play; you render him unhappy. It may be said, perhaps, that it is amusement he seeks from his play, and not gain. Let him then play for nothing: his interest will be lost, and *ennüi* will ensue. It is not, therefore, amusement only that he aims at: a simple, unexciting

game will weary him. He must kindle in his sport, till he forces himself to believe that he shall derive pleasure from acquiring that, which would afford him none were it made a condition that he discontinued his play. Thus passion is excited; and the trifle pursued becomes the object of desire, of anger, of fear; as children become frightened at the figures that they themselves have daubed.*

How is it that that man, who lost his only son a few months since, or who only this morning was so oppressed with cares and controversies, now seems to have lost all remembrance of his troubles? † Cease your surprise: he is engrossed with watching the course of yonder boar, which the dogs have been so fiercely chasing for six

* This is a comparison borrowed also from Montaigne.

† At page 110 of the MS. there is a kind of rough sketch of the above passage, which seems to have been thrown off hastily by Pascal, and is in many parts erased with his own pen. It is as follows:—

"See that man so oppressed with grief, at the death of his wife, or an only son, or harassed with some vexatious law-suit!—How is it that now his sorrow is gone, and he is relieved from his painful reflections? You need not be surprised: he is engaged in throwing [*Jeter.*—The copy has *servir.* This and other words in the margin of the page have been cut off, and are wanting in the MS. aut.] a ball, and receiving it back from his comrade; or he is watching a foot-race: how can you suppose he can think of any thing else, with such important matters to occupy him? O worthy objects to fill a great mind, and concentrate all its thoughts! See yonder eminent person, born to acquire universal knowledge; to form a mature judgment of all things; to direct, perhaps, an empire:—see such a man engrossed and absorbed in the capture of a hare!

"And if he strives not thus to descend, but to keep his powers ever on the stretch, he is not the less foolish; for he aims to elevate himself above ordinary mortality, and yet is but a man after all!—He is capable of little and of great things, of every thing and of nothing! He is, in short, neither angel nor beast, but *man!*

"— One train of thought only occupies us at once: we cannot think of two things at once. Then, according to the world, but not according to God. . . . . ."

hours. He wants nothing more. Full of griefs as he was, get him to throw his whole mind into the sport, and for that period he is happy!

[+] On the other hand, let a man be as prosperous as he may, if not occupied and diverted by some object of passion or amusement, which may ward off the invasions of weariness, he will soon become disturbed and unhappy. Without diversion, there will be no pleasure; with it, no disquiet. And thus it is, that persons of high station are furnished with a perpetual circle of dissipation by the means of the crowd around them, whose business and interest it is to invent an incessant change of amusements.

Mark then my words:—What is there in being a governor, a chancellor, a president, more than this,—that such dignitaries have round them, from morning to night, a crowd of people from all quarters, who leave them not an hour in the day in which their thoughts can turn upon themselves? But if they fall into disgrace, and are sent to retirement in their own residences, though they may be surrounded with everything to contribute to their comfort and luxury, we find them sink into weariness and misery, merely because they have none about them to dissipate the pains of self-reflection.

[+] *Amusement.*

III. Is there not, in royalty, then, sufficient to constitute the happiness of its possessor, by the mere contemplation of itself? Must his thoughts be turned away from himself, like those of ordinary mortals? I can understand that a common man may be made happy, and his reflections effectually diverted from his sordid

troubles, by some dignified accomplishment,—such, for instance, as dancing. But is it so with a King? and can he find more felicity in such petty amusements, than in the contemplation of his royal grandeur? Where can any other object be found commensurate with the largeness of his mind? Is it not to wrong his self-complacency to attempt to fill his thoughts with the adjustment of his steps to an air, or with throwing a ball with exactness, instead of leaving him undisturbed in his reflections upon the glory and dignity which surround him? Try the experiment, then. Leave your Sovereign to himself,—without satisfaction to his tastes, without solace to his mind, without society,—his thoughts left to revolve upon themselves; and you will see that a King without amusements is a miserable man. Therefore it is, that all this is sedulously avoided; and, as was before remarked, you never fail to see around these great personages numbers of people, on the watch to intermix diversion with their occupations, and to fill up every interval of leisure with a round of pleasures which may prevent a feeling of listlessness and vacuity; which shall keep them, in short, from themselves, and avert reflection; well knowing that a King, even, will be miserable, if he thinks.

[+] Be it observed, once for all, that I make no reference here to *Christian Kings as Christians*, but simply as *Kings*.

[+] *Amusement.*

IV. Men, therefore, being unable to escape from death, misery and ignorance have conspired together,

in order to secure their happiness, to banish the subject from their thoughts.

— + Notwithstanding this his misery, man desires happiness,—he desires nothing but happiness,—he cannot do otherwise than desire happiness. But how is he to attain it? To do so effectually, he ought to be able to make himself immortal; but this not being possible, his aim is to forget his mortality.

+*Amusement.*

V. Death is more easily endured without thought, than the thought of death without danger.

+*Amusement.*

VI. + Were man happy, his joy would increase in proportion as his amusement lessened, as is the case with the saints, and with God.

True: but is there no happiness in pleasure and amusement? No: for these things are external and adventitious, and are thus dependent on accident, and liable to be disturbed by a hundred circumstances which may turn them into inevitable sufferings.

+ *Misery.*

VII. The only thing that dissipates our misery is amusement; yet this is the main source of our misery.

For this it is which principally prevents self-reflection, and leads us on insensibly to ruin. But for this, we should be left to our feelings of weariness; and this

weariness would impel us to seek more effectual means of relief. Diversion dissipates thought, and lulls us unconsciously into the arms of death.

[+] The evils of life have caused this. Contemplating those evils, man has thrown himself upon dissipation as a refuge.

VIII. See the condition of man! it is one of unvarying inconstancy, weariness, disquietude!

IX. Whoever does not perceive the vanity of the world, is himself full of vanity. Who is there, in fact, (excepting the very young, who are involved in its vortex,) that does not perceive its vanity, both in the nature of its diversions, and in the perpetual intrusion of the thoughts of futurity? Take, then, from men their amusements, and you will see them consumed with weariness: they feel their nothingness, without possessing a real knowledge of it. What unhappiness is equal to the sensation of oppressive languor, the instant that diversion is intermitted, and the mind is suffered to reflect?

X. [+] That man should feel an interest in the throwing of a ball, or chasing a hare! And that these should also be the pastimes of Kings!

[+] *Pensées.*

XI. [+] "*In omnibus requiem quæsivi.*"

Surely, if our state were one of true happiness, we

should need nothing more than the contemplation of it, to make us happy.

[+] *Ennui.*

XII. [+] Nothing is so insupportable to a man as a state of perfect calm,—without passion, without business, without amusement, without habits of application. Then it is that he feels his nothingness, his destitution, his deficiencies; his dependence, his impotence; his emptiness of self-comfort. At once he finds arise from the secret recesses of his spirit, weariness, melancholy, sorrow, spleen, despondency, despair!

[+] Weariness ensues on quitting any occupation to which we have been devoted. A man lives happily in the midst of his calling: he sees, perhaps, a female who pleases him; he amuses himself for five or six days agreeably; then he is miserable on returning to his former employment. This is a common case.

[+] *Agitation.*

XIII. [+] When a soldier or a labourer complains of his toils, let him be set to do nothing!

XIV. Prone, by nature, in every condition, to unhappiness, our desires are ever picturing some state of fancied happiness, while they super-add to our actual condition the pleasures of the imaginary one; but if we were to attain to that state we should not be happy, because we should be subject to fresh desires incident to that new condition.

† Let us proceed to particularize this general proposition . . . . . .

XV. We never confine ourselves to the present time. We deem the hours too slow in their progress, and eagerly anticipate futurity; or we linger in the past, as if we would seek to arrest the flight of time. Such is our improvidence,—to expatiate in a future not our own, while we neglect the present, which is all that belongs to us! Such is our vanity, to look back upon that which is past and is nothing, yet allow the present (which alone is real and substantial) to glide away without care or reflection! The cause of this is, that the present is usually productive of pain. We seek to shut our eyes to it when it grieves us; when agreeable, we regret to see it pass away. We endeavour to draw comfort from hopes of futurity; flatter ourselves to regulate things which are not in our control; and speculate upon times that may never arrive.

Let every one examine his thoughts, and he will find them occupied and filled with the time past and to come. The present engages little of our attention; and the chief use we make of it is, to prepare and light up the way for futurity. The present is to the future but as means to an end. We never actually live, but hope to live;* and thus, ever forming prospects of future happiness, it invariably follows, that the happiness is never attained.

* Orig. "*Nous ne vivons jamais, mais nous espérons de vivre.*"

† The identity of Pope's sentiment with the above is striking:—

"Hope springs eternal in the human breast;
Man never *is*, but always *to be* blest." (Transl.)

CHAPTER II.

ON DECEPTIVE INFLUENCES.

(DES PUISSANCES TROMPEUSES.)

EDITORIAL NOTICE.

THE title and the heading of this chapter are given by Pascal himself in a note found at page 370 of the MS., as appears by one transcribed at the foot of the following page.

By "*Puissances trompeuses*," we may understand all those causes of error or deception, internal or external, which bias the reason, and disturb—in a greater or less degree—the judgment.

We consider it most conformable to Pascal's intention to include in this chapter, not only his remarks upon the imagination, and upon personal peculiarities and diseases, but also upon those prejudices which grow out of our habits, or result from the manner in which objects are presented to us, and upon self-love.

The paper upon Self-love is not found either in the autograph MS., or in the two copies. We give it as collected from the little MS. in 8vo., where it appears with the inscription, "Written by Mons. Pascal." It is found also in the Literary History of Port Royal, by Dom Clémencet. M. St. Beuve has been so obliging as to furnish us with a copy of this MS., which has *never before been published.*

It is probable that Pascal might have made a different arrangement of these various fragments, besides giving them a fuller development; but it is not presumptuous to suppose that he would have comprised *them all under this general division.* (*French Editor.*)

*ON DECEPTIVE INFLUENCES.

* MAN is, by the constitution of his nature, a being full of error; and this is ineffaceable, excepting by Grace. Nothing is available to keep him in the paths of truth: all things deceive him. The two main sources by which truth is conveyed to him,—reason, and sense,—besides that they are both deficient in integrity, reciprocally deceive each other. The senses abuse reason by false appearances; and the very same deceptions which they practise upon reason, are, in her turn, practised upon them again by reason. She thus takes her revenge:—the passions of the mind disturb the senses, and make false impressions upon them; they emulate each other in falsehood and deception. †

But besides these errors which result from accident and from want of intelligence, with these heterogeneous powers ‡ . . . . .

I.

*IMAGINATION.

I. This is the deceptive province of man's mind, the fruitful source of error and falsehood; and it is the more treacherous, inasmuch as it is not uniformly and

* In the margin is written, "Here will begin the chapter on Deceptive Influences."

† Montaigne says, "*Ceste mesme piperie que les sons apportent à nostre entendement, ils la reçoivent à leur tour; nostre âme par fois s'en revanche de mesme: ils mentent et se trompent à l'envy.*"—Essays, Book ii., chap. 42.

‡ This sentence is imperfect, and almost illegible.

consistently so; imagination would serve as an infallible rule of truth if it were infallibly false.* But being for the most part (although not always) fallacious, it gives no indication of its proper quality, but throws the same colouring over truth and falsehood.

+ I am not referring here to the weak and foolish; I speak of the wisest of men; and it is among them that imagination exercises its most powerful influences over the mind. Reason may well complain that she knows not how to put a just estimate on the objects presented to her consideration.

This mighty power—the perpetual antagonist of reason—which delights to show its ascendency by bringing her under its control and dominion, has created a second nature in man. It has its joys and its sorrows, its health, its sicknesses, its wealth, its poverty; it compels reason, in spite of herself, to believe, to doubt, to deny; it suspends the exercise of the senses, and imparts to them again an artificial acuteness; it has its follies and its wisdom; and the most perverse thing of all is, that it fills its votaries† with a complacency more full and complete even than that which reason can supply. The imaginative have pleasures peculiar to themselves, and into which those of more phlegmatic dispositions cannot enter. They aspire to mastery over the minds of others; they argue with confidence

* In the St. Germain's copy the commencement of this passage is thus altered by Nicole, in his own writing:—"This source of error and falsehood, *which is called fancy and opinion.*" This alteration has been retained in subsequent editions.

† Orig. *hôtes.* This word stood at first in the MS. "*Sectateurs,*" which I have more nearly followed in the above rendering. (Transl.)

and hardihood, while others are cautious and timid; their self-complacent temperament gives them often an advantage over their hearers; and their imaginary wisdom finds ready favour with judges as visionary as themselves. It is not in their power, indeed, to impart wisdom to fools; but they can make them happy* in spite of reason, who is only able to make her followers dissatisfied with themselves. The one, in short, covers men with glory; the other lays them low in humiliation.

What is it that is the dispenser of reputation? What enforces reverence for persons, for performances, for the laws, for the great men of the world, but this imaginative faculty? † All the riches in the universe can avail nothing without its acquiescence.

Would you not say that yonder magistrate, whose venerable aspect carries universal deference and authority, is guided in his opinions by the purest and most elevated intelligence; and judges every thing upon its intrinsic merits, uninfluenced by any of those adventitious trivialities which are wont to sway the judgment of the weak-minded? See him repair to Church, full of devout zeal,—the solidity of his reasoning powers aided by the warmth of holy love. He prepares to listen to the sermon with exemplary reverence. The preacher appears. Let, now, nature have inflicted upon the man a discordant voice, or an ill-favoured aspect; let his barber have shaved him badly, or his exterior have been in any other way disfigured;—be the truths he announces

* Arnauld has written in the copy *contents* instead of *heureux*.

† "*Cette faculté imaginante;*" altered in the hand-writing of Nicole to "*l'opinion des hommes.*"

as weighty as they may, I will lay a wager the gravity of our venerable senator is gone!

Let the profoundest philosopher in the world be placed upon a plank, overhanging a precipice; although his reason assures him that it is much wider than is required for safety,* his imaginary fears will assuredly overcome him. Most persons would not even be able to bear the thought of such a thing without tremor and alarm.†

Who does not know that the sight of a cat, or a rat, the treading upon a coal, and a hundred other things, will carry some persons beyond all bounds of moderation! The mere tone of the voice imposes upon the wisest, and will change the entire impression of a speech or a poem.‡

+ Affection or hatred will utterly bias the course of justice; and a well-fee'd advocate is strongly prepossessed in favour of the merits of his case.§ How well does his confident bearing impose upon the credulity of the judges! O hapless reason, which a mere breath can thus sway to its will and purpose!

+ I will not, however, attempt to enumerate all its effects:|| it would be to give a catalogue of almost every

* This stood at first, "larger than the space he usually occupies in walking."

† Montaigne:—"*Qu'on jette une poultre entre ces deux tours, . . il n'y a sagesse philosophique de si grande fermeté qui puisse vous donner courage d'y marcher.*"—Essays, Book ii., chap. 12.

‡ Montaigne:—"*Tant la prononciation à de crédit à donner prix et façon aux ouvrages qui passent à sa merci.*"—Book ii., chap. 12.

§ Montaigne, Book i., chap. 12:— . . . "*L'avez-vous bien payé pour y mordre? . . . Sa raison et sa science s'y échauffent.*"

|| The effects of the imagination.

description of human action, which is more or less disturbed by its irregularities. Reason has been forced from her seat; and the wisest men are obliged to adopt as their principles those which imagination has everywhere arbitrarily superinduced.*

II. Well, indeed, are our magistrates aware of this secret. Their scarlet robes, their ample folds of ermine, muffling them up like antiquated tabbies,† the stateliness of the courts of justice, the *fleurs de lis*,—all this imposing array, has its importance; and, but for our doctors' cassocks and slippers, and our professors' capacious caps and robes, which are irresistible with the multitude, they would never have duped the world as they have done. The soldier does not affect these kind of disguises, because his function is a more necessary one; he makes his way by force, the others by grimace.‡

In the same way Sovereigns do not resort to these species of masquerades. They rely not upon the splendour of habiliments to impress their subjects; but they surround themselves with guards and halberds. Those fierce and fiery aspects, which lend to them an artificial force; those clanging trumpets and roaring drums, which

* There occurs here in the MS., but erased, the following sentence:—"We are obliged . . . to labour all day for advantages felt to be imaginary; and when sleep has recruited our faculties, we rise again eagerly to pursue the same phantoms, and submit ourselves again to the yoke of this mistress of the world."

† "*S'emmaillottent en chats fourrés.*" This in the MS. stands, "*chafourrés.*"

"——— Robes and furred gowns hide all."—*Shakspeare.* (*K. Lear.*)

‡ At page 283 of the MS., there is this detached note, which seems a kind of rough sketch of the above passage:—"The Chancellor carries a grave aspect, and is covered with insignia; for his office is one of imaginary dignity. Not so the King; he has real power, and needs not to rely on imagination. Judges, physicians, &c., have artificial dignity."

precede their steps; the armed legionaries that surround them;—these are things which impress the firmest minds. They carry not merely external, but intrinsic weight. It requires a very unimpassioned state of reason to regard, as a mere ordinary mortal, a mighty Potentate in his palace, surrounded with forty thousand janizaries.

If our magistrates dispensed pure justice, if physicians possessed really the power of curing disease, they would need no formality of square caps; the dignity of their professions would, of itself, ensure respect. But, dealing often in imaginary learning, they are obliged to resort to these poor artifices, which impress the imagination of those with whom they are conversant; and it is by such unworthy means as these that they gain the reverence of the multitude.*

It is difficult to see an advocate in his gown and cap without being favourably impressed with his ability.

Imagination† sways everything. It creates beauty, justice, happiness,—which are everything to the world. I should like extremely to see that Italian work, which I know only by its title, (and that is itself worth more than many books,) "*Della opinione, regina del mondo.*" I subscribe to its truth, without knowing anything more of it, always excepting any mixture of evil it may contain, if such there be.

† These, then, are the workings of this subtle faculty, which seems to be given us expressly to lead us into error. It possesses, however, many other properties.

* This paragraph is written in the margin of the MS., without an indication of the precise place it was intended to occupy.

† Nicole, in the copy, has written, "*l'opinion*" in place of "*l'imagination.*"

III. It is not alone old impressions which have the power of misleading us; the charms of novelty possess the same faculty also. Thence arise those multitudinous disputes, wherein the partisans on one side are reproached for adhering to the false prejudices of their early days, and those on the other, for following crude and untried novelties. Who is there that is able to hold a middle course between the two extremes?* Let him come forward, and make the attempt. There is no impression, however natural, received from early infancy, whether of education or of the senses, which may not be made to appear false. Because, says one, you have from childhood believed that a chest is empty, inasmuch as you see nothing in it, you have believed a vacuum to be possible: it is an illusion of the senses, strengthened by habit, which science must correct. Others say, Because they tell you in the schools, there is no such thing as vacuum, your common sense has been imposed upon, and you have received the dogma literally: this must be set right, and you must rely on the evidence of nature. Which is then the deceiver?—sense, or education?

IV. We have another element of error,—our sicknesses! These impose upon the judgment and the senses. And if the graver kind of maladies produce more obvious delusions, I doubt not that the minor ailments make their impressions also in proportion.†

* "*Qui tient le juste milieu.*" This happy phrase seems to admit only of such a rendering as the above, although somewhat paraphrastical. (Transl.)

† Montaigne:—"Who can doubt . . . . . that if a continued fever overpowers the mental force, an intermitting one produces its effect in its degree."—Book ii., ch. xii.

V. Our interest, again, is wonderfully instrumental in warping our views to our inclinations. The most equitably disposed man in the world ought not to be judge in his own cause. I have known some, who, in order not to fall into this temptation of self-love, have committed acts of the greatest injustice in a contrary direction. The surest way with them to ruin a cause, however just, has been to give it the recommendation of some near relative. Justice and truth are so subtle in their nature, that our instruments are too blunt exactly to touch them. If they succeed in reaching the points, they crush them; and find their resting place rather on falsehood than reality.

VI. This universal despot* has in herself little independence of action, but is liable to be troubled by the slightest external disturbance around her. It does not need the report of a cannon to distract the thoughts; the creaking of the weather-cock, or a pulley, will be sufficient. Do not be surprised that yonder pleader is just now reasoning badly: a fly is tickling his ears;—there is the secret of his vicious arguments.† If you would have him establish his point, drive away the insect which is keeping his reason in check, and disturbing that powerful understanding capable of influencing the destiny of cities and

* "*L'esprit de ce souverain juge du monde.*" This stood at first, "*La souveraine intelligence de ce monarque de l'univers.*"

† Montaigne, Book ii., chap. 12: — "*Un songe, une voix, un signe, une brouée matinière suffisent à le renverser et porter par terre.*"—And Book iii., last chap.:—"*Quand mon esprit est empêché à part soi, le moindre bourdonnement de mouche l'assassine.*"

kingdoms. A pretty kind of divinity is this! "*O ridicolosissimo eroe!*"

VII. How difficult is it to propose anything to the judgment of another, without biasing his opinion by the method of propounding it! If we say, I find such a thing agreeable, or such a thing obscure, we incline the imagination of the other party to our judgment, or repel it from us. It is better to say nothing; and then the party forms his judgment according to the naked facts, and the actual circumstances of the case. But, at all events, we shall have added nothing to them, except, indeed, that silence itself may not be without its influence, according to the interpretation that may be put upon it; as well, even, as our gestures, tones of voice, and expression of countenance, if the person addressed be a physiognomist. So hard is it to avoid warping the judgment from its equipoise, or rather so small a measure does it possess, by nature, of firmness and stability.

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† *Prejudice leading to error.*

† VIII. It is lamentable to see how all mankind are accustomed to regard means only, and not the end: every one considers how they should fulfil their condition; but as to the choice of that condition, and of all the circumstances of our life, that is left to chance.

† It is pitiable to see such multitudes of Mahomedans, heretics, infidels, following in the way of their forefathers, solely from the prejudice of each that it is the best way. This also is what determines the generality of men to their calling in life,—smiths, soldiers, &c.

Thoughts.

+ We are all one, and yet many beings. What various natures are there in every individual man! How various are our callings! And by what mere accident does every one take to that which he has been led to adopt! *

+ Talent well cultivated.

Professional talent.

+ O, such a thing is well done! Such a one is an able workman! That soldier is brave!—This is the source of our inclinations, and of our choice in life. Such a one drinks hard! Such another drinks little!—These are the things, that make men sober, or drunkards, soldiers, cowards, &c.

The most important thing in life is the choice of a calling: yet chance has the chief disposal of it. Accident makes men masons, soldiers, slaters. "Such a one is an excellent slater," it is said: and then, speaking of soldiers, "They are great fools," it will be said. Others, on the contrary, will cry, "There is nothing so noble as the profession of arms; all other people are mere knaves." It is from hearing these respective professions extolled from infancy, that our choice is determined; for we naturally love what is estimable, and dislike folly. Such expressions as these exercise a beneficial influence over us; we err only in their application. So great is the force of custom, that where nature has formed only men, we

* "*Ce qu'il a ouï estimer.*" Instead of this the copies have, "*Ce qu'il a le moins étudié;*" which is unmeaning.

form the various conditions of men; some districts producing none but masons, others only soldiers, &c. Nature, doubtless, is not thus uniform. It is habit, which, constraining the bent of nature, achieves this; yet, occasionally, nature obtains the victory, and retains men in the sway of their natural instincts, in spite of all the power of habit, good or bad.

Men, whatever their callings, are *disguisers* by nature, except in their inmost retirement.*

II.

SELF-LOVE.

The nature of self-love, of this egotism natural to man, is to love and to regard self only. Yet what does it really do? It cannot prevent this object of its idolatry from being full of defects and misery. It desires to be great, and it sees itself to be little; it desires to be happy, it sees itself to be miserable; it desires to be perfect, it sees itself full of imperfection; it desires to be the object of universal love and esteem, and it sees that its faults draw down only aversion and contempt. This conflict to which self exposes itself produces the most perverted and criminal dispositions; for it conceives a rooted aversion

* "*Hommes naturellement couvreurs, et de toutes vocations, hormis en chambre.*" I am not satisfied that the above rendering of this passage is correct, but I am incapable of a better. (Transl.)

to truth, by which its defects are exposed and reproved. Self-love would desire, in fact, to annihilate truth; but, not being able effectually to do this, it aims to impair her, as much as lies in its power, in its own apprehension, and in that of others: that is to say, it takes every pains to conceal its defects both from others and from itself. It will not see them itself, nor suffer them to be seen by others.

It is certainly an evil to be full of faults; but it is a still greater evil, having such faults, to be determined not to perceive them; for it is to add to their number that of a voluntary self-deception. We resent the attempt of others to deceive us; we resist their endeavours to exact from *us* a higher measure of esteem than they deserve: is it not right also that *we* should not deceive them, nor aim to obtain from them greater respect than we merit?

Then, as they do no more than discern in us those imperfections and faults which we actually possess, it is obvious that they do us no wrong. It is not they that are the cause of this; and they render us a service in helping to deliver us from a great evil,—that of being ignorant of our own errors. We ought not surely to be displeased at their knowing, and disesteeming us: it is but right that others should know us to be what we really are, and to disesteem us for those things wherein our conduct is blameworthy.

These are sentiments which should be natural to a spirit true to the dictates of equity and justice. What are we to say then to our own, in which we find dispositions so opposite? Is it not the fact that we hate the truth, and those who tell us the truth? that we love those who deceive

us agreeably? and that we desire to be esteemed by others for good qualities of which we are destitute?

Take a fearful instance of this evil:—The Roman Catholic system does not compel men to reveal their offences to the world indiscriminately: it allows us, in fact, to conceal them from other men, with the exception of one individual, to whom we are commanded to open the hidden evils of our heart, and to discover ourselves in our secret characters. There is but one person in the world to whom we are ordered thus to unbosom ourselves; and that person is enjoined to the most inviolable secrecy, the effect of which is, that the revelations thus made to him are as if they existed not. Can anything be more gracious and considerate than this? And yet, such is the corruption of men, that they find a hardship in this rule; and this is one of the principal causes of the *defection* of a large portion of Europe from the church.

How unjust and unreasonable is the human heart, that it should take amiss to be obliged to do that, in regard to one individual, which would, in a certain sense, be proper were it done in regard to all men! For can it ever be right that we should deceive?*

There are different degrees in this aversion to truth; but it may be affirmed that it exists, in a measure, in all men, for it is inseparable from self-love. This is the cause

* In the above passage, in eulogy of the Confessional of the Romish church, independently of the obvious want of *Scriptural* authority for the practice, which is almost avowed in the language used by the author,—"we are commanded," "it is enjoined," &c., and which leads us naturally to ask, by whom are we commanded and enjoined? the praise conveys, in a curious manner, its own *antidote*, in the admission that this mischievous practice had occasioned to the church the *defection* of a large portion of Europe. (Transl.)

of that false delicacy which compels those who have occasion to reprove, to resort to so many shifts and alleviations, to avoid wounding the feelings. They are obliged to extenuate, to excuse, to mingle with their reprehension expressions of praise, and professions of affection and esteem. And, after all, the medicine thus presented is distasteful to our self-love. It will receive as little of it as possible, and there is often left behind a secret ill-will against those by whom it is administered.

Hence it is found, that those who have a motive for cultivating our favour, evade an office which they know to be disagreeable to us: they treat us as they wish themselves to be treated. We hate the truth; they conceal it from us: we love to be flattered; they ply us with adulation: we love to be deceived; they deceive us.

This is the reason why every successive step which elevates us in worldly prosperity, removes us *farther and farther* from truth; because we fear giving offence to those whose good opinion may be useful, and their enmity dangerous to us. A prince may be the jest of all Europe, and he alone be utterly unconscious of his absurdities. I am not surprised at this. Truth is useful to him to whom it is told, but prejudicial (because the source of dislike) to those who tell it. Those, therefore, who surround the great, love their own interest better than the prince whom they serve; and thus they care not to render him a benefit, when, in doing so, they injure themselves.

This evil is, doubtless, the greater, and more common, in the case of persons of eminence; but those of the humblest station are not exempt from it, inasmuch as all have some interest in the good opinion of their fellow-men.

Thus is human life one incessant scene of illusion; a perpetual interchange of deception and flattery. No one talks of another in his presence as he would if he were absent. The union between men is founded alone upon this mutual deceit; and few friendships would be permanent, if each knew what his friend said of him when he was not by, although he might express himself with sincerity, and without prejudice.*

Man, therefore, is a being made up of disguise, falsehood, hypocrisy, both in regard to himself and to his fellows. He suffers not truth to be told to himself, and he withholds it from others; and all these propensities, so opposed to justice and reason, have their root in the natural evil of his heart.†

* Pascal has this sentiment in another place. See "Miscellaneous Writings," p. 224.

† It is, perhaps, needless to remind the reader that in this, as in other similar passages, the state of man, by *nature*, is referred to, uncontrolled by *religious* principle. (Transl.)

CHAPTER III.

DISPROPORTIONS,

OR,

INEQUALITIES IN MAN.

EDITORIAL NOTICE.

THE fragments upon the two infinitudes, which are here collected into one chapter under the preceding title, bear the same name also in the autograph MS. But in the first and subsequent editions, this expressive title disappears, and is replaced by that of "General knowledge of man."

There are few passages in Pascal of more beauty, or which have suffered more injury at the hands of his editors, than these. We find in the text furnished by them every species of alteration. They have added passages never composed by him; such, for instance, as the paragraph, which in these editions commences the chapter, "*La première chose qui s'offre à l'homme quand il se regarde, c'est son corps,*" *&c., &c.*

This paragraph is not to be found at all in the MS.; besides which, its style and diction are altogether awkward and obscure,—clear proofs that it is not from Pascal's pen: in short, it does not at all harmonize with the subject under discussion.

Several passages in these fragments are found, in the editions referred to, removed from their proper place, and dispersed among other chapters: a glance at the figures placed in the margin, as references to the pages in the old edition, will suffice to give an idea of these strange transpositions.

(*French Editor.*)

DISPROPORTIONS,

OR,

INEQUALITIES IN MAN.

Disproportions, or, Inequalities in Man.*

I. † See the consequences of mere natural knowledge. If these things are not true, then is there no truth in man: if they are, there results from them deep cause of humiliation: and, in one way or another, we are compelled to self-abasement. But since we cannot exist without the belief of such things, I should wish, before entering upon researches into the greatest mysteries of nature, that we should look calmly and deliberately into it; then contemplate ourselves; and judge, by the comparison which is thus made of the two, whether there is any proportion between them.† (Erased.)

Let man, then, raise his views above the petty objects which surround him, and contemplate the entire expanse of nature, in all its majestic perfections; let him gaze upon that dazzling orb, suspended, from the commencement of time, in mid-heaven, like the gorgeous lamp of the universe; let him consider this our earth as but a minute point, in comparison with the mighty circle which

* "*Disproportion.*" This expression stood at first, "*Incapacité.*"

† This passage is entirely struck through in the MS.; furthermore, the two last lines after "ourselves" are obliterated; and above them is written by Pascal this beginning of a sentence, "*et connaissant quelle proportion il y a . . .*" which again is broken off, and the whole paragraph erased.

that luminary describes;* and then let him remember with astonishment, that this prodigious orbit itself is again nothing more than the minutest speck, in comparison with that which the circling firmament of the constellations embraces!

But if the evidence of the sight is here arrested, let imagination pass beyond its limits; she will grow weary in conceiving—sooner than nature in furnishing—matter for her apprehension.† The whole visible world‡ is but as an imperceptible atom in the ample bosom of Nature.§ Thought is here baffled. We may swell, as we will, our conceptions beyond all imaginable space; we produce only atoms, instead of the mighty realities around us. We find a shore of infinite extent, whose centre is in every part,—its circumference in none!|| Behold, then, herein

* "*Que la terre lui paraisse comme un point, au prix du vaste tour que cet astre décrit.*" This stood at first:—"*Que le vaste tour qu'elle décrit, lui fasse regarder la terre comme un point.*" Did Pascal, it may be asked, in altering this passage, show that he wished not to express an opinion on the comparative systems of Copernicus and Galileo? It is certain that "*cet astre*" refers to the sun, and not to the earth. And it is remarkable that Pascal always declined to commit himself to an opinion upon the question; not that he had any fear of the Inquisition, as Condorcet has sneeringly asserted, but because his conviction was not settled upon the point. (French Editor.)

I have inserted the foregoing note of the ingenious French Editor, because, like all his remarks, it is entitled to attention; but there is a passage in the "Provincial Letters," (Letter 18, p. 395,) which seems to me to carry strong evidence that Pascal had little doubt of the truth of Galileo's theory. (Transl.)

† This was at first, "In conceiving the immensities of space, sooner than nature in furnishing them."

‡ This stood, "But an atom in immensity;" then again, "in amplitude," "*dans l'amplitude.*"

§ There are here, in the first and subsequent Editions, the following words:—"*Tout ce que nous voyons du monde.*" This correction is in Arnauld's handwriting in the St. Germain's copy, p. 91.

|| This striking comparison, which Voltaire attributes to Timée de Locres, is found also in Gerson.

the plainest proof of the omnipotence of Jehovah,—that our imagination is lost and overwhelmed in the contemplation of these His stupendous works!

Now, let man look into himself, and consider what he is, in comparison with universal being: let him regard himself as cast forth upon this obscure province of nature; and then, from the petty nook on which he is placed,—for so I call this visible world,*—let him learn to form a just estimate of the earth, of its kingdoms, of its cities, of himself!

What is Man in the scale of infinitude?

Now, to show him another prodigy not less astonishing, let him consider the extent to which his knowledge can penetrate in objects the most minute. Take the smallest of worms: see in its petty body a multitude of parts infinitely smaller,—the limbs with their joints, the veins in the midst of those limbs, the blood in those veins, the various humours in the blood, the globules composing the humours, the vapours in the globules. Subdividing these again, let him strain the force of his conceptions, and make the lowest particle that he can imagine the subject of investigation: he will suppose, perhaps, that he has arrived at the extreme of minuteness in nature. I will discover to him here a further abyss of wonders. He will see delineated, not only the visible universe, but all that he can conceive of the immensity of nature, in the compass of this *concentration* of an atom.† There

* "*L'Univers.*" In the St. Germain copy, Arnauld has here substituted, in his own hand, "*ce monde visible.*"

† "*Raccourci d'atôme.*" The reading, in all the preceding editions, is, "*atôme imperceptible;*" and, in reference to this, M. Cousin says in his Rapport, p. 126:—"*Combien de fois n'a-t-on pas cité avec admiration cette*

will be found in it an infinity of systems, each with its firmament, its planets, its earth, all bearing the same proportion to each other as in the visible world: in this earth, the infinite variety of animal existences; and, last of all, the very worms we have been describing; in which will be discovered all that was furnished by the first which we made the subject of examination; and in them, again, will be found continually the things that have been already enumerated, without cessation, and without end. Thus will the spectator be lost in mysteries, as astonishing by their minuteness, as the former were by their magnitude. For who will withhold his admiration, to find this body of ours, which before seemed an imperceptible speck in the midst of the universe, and that universe again imperceptible in the bosom of infinitude,—to see it now become a Colossus, a world, an infinitude itself, in comparison of the nullity to which we have been striving in vain to descend!

Whoever pursues such contemplations as these will tremble as he considers himself thus suspended, by the appointment of nature, between these two abysses—of infinite magnitude, and of nothingness; curiosity will yield to admiration; and he will end by a silent contem-

expression déjà si belle: 'dans l'enceinte de cet atôme imperceptible?'" What, then, shall be said of the *real* expression of Pascal, "*Dans l'enceinte de ce raccourci d'abîme?*"

This latter reading is only found in two copies. In the MS. the phrase has yet more energy, and, what is more important, more of propriety, viz., "*raccourci d'atôme.*" The word "*atôme,*" which, by an error of the copyist, has been turned into "*abîme,*" is visibly that of the MS. (French Editor.)

The term in question, here translated "concentration," is more literally, "abridgment, abbreviation, or epitome." (Transl.)

plation of these profound mysteries, rather than by wearying himself in presumptuous investigation.

For, again, I ask, What is man in the midst of nature? He is a nothing in comparison with infinitude; he is everything in comparison with nullity: he is a central point between nothing and everything. Their extremes being infinitely beyond his comprehension, the finality and the first principle of things are concealed from his view under an impenetrable mystery; and he is equally incapable of searching into the nonentity from which he was derived, and the infinitude into which he is absorbed.

What remains for him, then, to do, but to acquire some superficial knowledge of the objects around him, hopeless of investigating their origin or their end?* All things that are, spring from nothingness, and hasten towards the infinite. Who, with unequal footsteps, shall attempt to track these marvels? Their great Author alone comprehends them; to all others they are hidden and unknown!

† Through want of due consideration of these things, men have set themselves to the investigation of nature, as if their apprehensions could bear any proportion to her ineffable mysteries.

Is it not, indeed, strange, that they should have attempted, with a presumption boundless as the object of their research, to investigate the first principles of these things; and, thence, to aspire to their entire comprehension? Assuredly, we repeat, such a design could never have been conceived, without a presumption, or an actual capacity, as unlimited as nature herself.

* Montaigne says, Book ii., ch. xii.:—"*Les extrêmités de notre perquisition tombent toutes en éblouissement,*" &c.

The well-instructed mind perceives that nature, having stamped her own image, and that of her divine Author, upon all created objects, they almost all partake of one or other of these two infinitudes. Thus we find that all the sciences are infinite in the extent of their researches. Who doubts, for example, that geometry is capable of exhibiting an infinitude of propositions? They are also infinite* in the multitude and the delicacy of their principles; for every one must see, that those which come last in order of proposition are not self-supported, but rest upon others; and those again upon others also; so that none of them possess finality.

+ But we are accustomed to deal with the principles which appear final to our limited understanding, in the same manner as in regard to material objects; where a certain point is called indivisible, because it is that beyond which our senses can perceive nothing, although it is by its nature infinitely divisible.

+ Of these two infinitudes in science, that of magnitude is by far the most obvious to the senses; and therefore it is, that it has happened to so few to possess universal knowledge on these subjects. "I am about to treat of all things," said Democritus.†

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* "*Elles sont aussi infinies.*" The preceding Editors and both copies have, "*Elle sera aussi infinie.*" The two words "*elles*" and "*infinies,*" are plainly plural in the MS., and consequently must refer to *sciences;* the MS. also has "*sont,*" and not "*sera.*"

† This quotation is adopted from Montaigne, Book ii., chap. 12.—"*De même imprudence est cette promesse du livre de Democritus: Je m'en vay parler de toutes choses.*"

After this paragraph, there was the following in the MS., afterwards erased:—"But besides that it is doing little simply to speak of these things, without thorough knowledge and demonstration, it is actually

Disproportions in Man.* — [+] H — 2.

II. We perceive at a glance, that arithmetic alone furnishes properties† without number, and every science does the same. (Erased.)

But infinitude in smallness is a far less obvious thing. Philosophers have pretended to arrive at it too soon; and this is where they have all stumbled. It is an error of this kind which has given rise to those titles so customary with them, "Of the principles of things,"—"Of the principles of philosophy,"‡ and others of equal pretension in reality, although not in appearance so offensive to the eye§ as that, "*de omni scibili.*"‖

We naturally believe ourselves much more capable of reaching the centre, than of embracing the circumference of things. The visible world, in all its magnitude and extent, obviously surpasses our powers: but as we, in our turn, surpass the minuter class of objects, we think ourselves more capable of comprehending them: and yet it demands no less capacity to attain to the apprehension

impossible to do so; the infinite multitude of things being so concealed from us, that all that we can express by words, or conceive in thought, is but an insignificant fraction of the whole: whence it is evident, how foolish, vain, and ignorant, is the title of certain works, *De omni scibili.*" This latter part of the sentence, from "whence it is evident," had been erased by the writer previous to expunging the whole paragraph; for, in reality, the title above referred to implies only all that *is* known, not all that can be known.

* "*Disproportion.*" This stood at first, "*Incapacité.*"

† The copy has in error, "*principes,*" instead of "*propriétés.*"

‡ A direct allusion to Descartes' work, entitled, "*Principia philosophiæ,*" previously referred to.

§ "*Qui crève les yeux;*" at first, "*qui blesse la vue.*"

‖ This is the title of the Theses which Jean Pic de la Mirandole sustained with high reputation at Rome, at the age of twenty-four. (Notes in Bossut's Edition.)

of nullity, than to that of universality. Infinitude of mind is required for the one, not less than for the other; and it appears to me that he who should have descended to the final principles of things, would also be able to stretch his conceptions to the heights of infinity also. The two mighty extremities seem to meet and re-unite, by the very force of their remoteness: they are both found in God, and in Him alone.

Let us then endeavour to know our proper sphere: we are something, but we are not everything. The nature of our existence hides from us the knowledge of the first principles which grow out of nullity, and the narrow limits of our being conceal infinitude from our view.

† The intellect of man holds the same rank in the order of intelligences as his body holds in the system of nature.

Limited on every side, all our powers hold a middle station between two extremes. Our senses shrink from all excess. Too much noise deafens us; too much light dazzles; too great distance, or contiguity, impedes the sight; prolixity, and excessive brevity in discourse, equally produce obscurity; † the very nakedness of truth confuses. I have known those who could not understand that to take four from zero there remains zero. † First principles carry with them too palpable proofs. † Too much pleasure wearies. † In music too much concord displeases. Too many benefits oppress;* we are restless till we can cancel† the obligation:‡ "*Beneficia eo usque*

* At first, "render us ungrateful."

† "*Surpayer*," not "*surpasser*," as in the copies.

‡ Here in the MS. are these words cancelled:—"*Si elle nous passe, elle blesse.*"

læta sunt dum videntur exsolvi posse; ubi multum antevenere, pro gratia odium redditur." *

We lose all feeling under the extremes of heat or cold. Qualities in excess injure, but are not felt by us; we suffer from them, but do not perceive them. The rawness of youth, and the dulness of age, impair the powers of the mind: our impressions are at one time too vivid, and afterwards become too dull.† In fact, things that are excessive are to us as if they were not, and we are nothing in respect of them; either they elude us, or we elude them.

This is our true state. It is from these causes that man is incapable both of perfect knowledge, and of absolute ignorance. We hover perpetually over a mighty expanse of uncertainty, ever fluctuating and doubtful, impelled continually from side to side, from one extreme to another. We think we have reached a point where we can fix and settle down; it wavers and slides from us: we follow it, and it escapes our reach,—glitters in the distance, and beckons us on in everlasting and fruitless pursuit. Nothing around us is stationary. It is the condition that is most natural to us, yet the most opposed to our inclinations. We burn with desire to find a firm site and a solid base, whereon to build a fabric which may scale infinitude; and, lo! our whole foundation suddenly gives way, and a dark and fathomless abyss yawns and shakes beneath us!

Let us then no longer look for assurance and certainty. Reason is ever subjected to delusion by the inconstancy

* This quotation, which is taken from Tacitus, *Ann.* Book iv., § 18, is found in Montaigne, chap. "*De l'art de conférer.*"

† Montaigne, Book ii., chap. 12:—"*La fin et le commencement de science se tiennent en pareille bêtise.*"

of the objects presented to her view; nothing can give stability to a finite being, in the midst of two opposite kinds of infinitude, which surround, yet ever fly from him.

Were this truth well apprehended, we should, I doubt not, remain in tranquillity,—each in that condition in which nature has placed us. This middle state which has been allotted to us, being equally distant from extremes on either side, what matters it to man, whether he gains a little more or less of insight into the things around him? Say, if he succeeds, that he makes some small advance in the scale of intelligence: is he not still at an infinite distance from the mighty goal? If life be lengthened some ten years more, is it not infinitely remote from an eternity of duration?

In the view of these infinitudes, every thing finite is equal; and I can see no place for the imagination to rest upon, in one more than in another. Any comparison which we make between ourselves and that which is finite, can cause only pain.

Let man study well himself, and he will see there are limits set to his understanding which he cannot overpass. How should that which is but a part acquire a knowledge of a whole? But he would at least, perhaps, aim to know those parts to which he himself bears some relation. Yet have all the parts of the universe such relation and such implication one with another, that I consider it impossible thoroughly to know the one without the other, and without the whole.

Man, for example, bears a relation to all things that he is acquainted with. He needs space for his inhabitation, time for his duration, movement for his existence;

the elements compose his body, heat and food subserve his nourishment, the air his respiration. Light is the medium of his vision, bodies of his sensation; in short, there is nothing but what stands in some connexion and relation to him.*

In order, then, properly to know what man is, we should know why he requires air for his existence; and to understand the properties of air, we must understand what is its relation to the life of man.

Fire cannot subsist without air: then, to understand the one, we should understand the other also.

All things, therefore, being to each other either causes or effects, subservient or subserved, mediate or direct;—and all being related by a natural and yet insensible tie, which binds together things the most distant and the most opposed;—I hold it to be impossible perfectly to know the parts without the whole, any more than to know the whole without a particular knowledge of all the several parts.†

And that which completes our incapability to acquire this knowledge is, that the things in question are homogeneous in their nature, while we are compounded of two natures, opposed to each other, and different in quality,—the soul and the body. It is impossible that the faculty by which we reason should be otherwise than spiritual: and when it is pretended that man may be solely corporeal

* "*Sous son alliance.*" This at first stood, "*sous ses recherches,*" and afterwards, "*sous sa dépendance.*"

† Pascal here wrote at first:—"I hold it impossible to know any one of these alone, and without all the rest: that is to say, impossible purely and absolutely." At the end of this paragraph are the following words, erased in the MS.:—"The idea of eternity, in itself, or in God, must ever confound our finite thought. The fixed and constant immoveableness of nature, compared with the perpetual change around us, produces the same effect."

in his nature, that would go far more than anything else to limit our knowledge; because nothing is so inconceivable as the assertion that matter can know itself. It is not possible for us to know how it could acquire such a knowledge.*

Thus, then, if we are simply material, we cannot by possibility know any thing at all; and if we are composed both of spirit and matter, we cannot perfectly understand things purely spiritual and purely corporeal.†

Hence it arises that almost all sects of philosophers are wont to exhibit confusion in their ideas, and speak indiscriminately of spiritual and corporeal things. They boldly assert, that bodies have a tendency to fall; that they gravitate towards the centre; that they shrink from destruction, fear a vacuum, and possess inclinations, sympathies, antipathies,—all which things are proper to spirit only. And when they refer to spirit, we find them treating of it as possessing locality, and attributing to it movement from place to place,—which are the properties of bodies only.

* This at first stood,—"And that which completes our incapability, is the simplicity of these things, compared with our two-fold and complex state. There are invincible absurdities to be overcome upon this point; for it is as absurd as it is impious to deny, that man is composed of two parts, differing in their nature,—soul and body. This renders us incapable of understanding anything. If this proposition be denied, and if it is contended that we are corporeal only, I leave it to be judged how incapable matter must be of understanding the properties of matter. Nothing is more incomprehensible than that.

"Only conceive how this compound of spirit and of dust *nous disproportionne . . . .*'"

† At first:—". . . . simple things: for how should we distinctly understand matter, since the instrument of this knowledge is partly spiritual? and how should we clearly understand spiritual things, with a body gross in its nature, and ever bowing us towards the earth?"

Instead of imbibing pure ideas of these things, we tinge them with our own qualities, and impress all the objects of our contemplation with the characters of our complex being.

Who would not suppose, seeing how we mingle the ideas of spirit and matter in all things, that this combination would be to us easy of comprehension? Yet is it the thing of all others that we understand the least. Man is to himself the greatest marvel in nature. He is incapable of conceiving what is body, and, still less, what is spirit; and, less than either the one or the other, can he comprehend the nature of the union between the body and the spirit. Here is the climax of his difficulties; and yet this is his own state of being! "*Modus quo corporibus adhæret spiritus comprehendi ab hominibus non potest; et hoc tamen homo est.*"*

† Lastly, to complete the proof of our impotency, I shall conclude with these two considerations . . . .†

III. † *Two Infinitudes. Centre.*

† If we read either too fast or too slowly, we understand nothing.‡

* "*De Spiritu et Anima.*" St. Augustin.

† Here followed this paragraph in the MS., but which was afterwards erased:—"These are part of the causes which render man so incompetent to acquire a knowledge of nature. *She* is infinite in various ways; *he* is finite and limited. She is everlasting, and knows no decay; he is mortal, and passes away. Sensible objects, in particular, are every instant undergoing change and corruption; man's observation of them is but a transient one: they have their commencement and their end; he understands neither the one nor the other. They are simple in their nature, and he composed of two natures that differ; and, to complete the proof of our impotency, I shall finish by this remark upon the condition of man's nature." The remainder of this passage is wanting in the MS.

‡ This remark, less the title, occurs again at p. 23 of the MS.

† Either too much or too little wine: give him none, and he will not be able to understand the subject; give him too much, and the effect will be the same.

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† "*Nature ne p. . . . .*"

† Nature has so well adjusted our position, that if we change one side of the equilibrium, we affect the other also. This leads me to believe that there are certain springs of thought and understanding so nicely disposed, that whoso touches the one, touches the other also. (Erased.)

Too early youth is unfavourable to the powers of judgment; and age too advanced the same.

By too little, and by too much thought, we equally become prejudiced and bewildered.*

If we revise a performance too early after its completion, we cannot free ourselves from prepossessions in its favour; if too late, we lose the continuity of our thoughts.

So it is with pictures seen from too great or too short a distance. There is but one point of view that is the exact one; all others are too near or too remote, too high or too low. The art of perspective fixes that point in regard of the painting: but who shall assign it in question of truth and morals?

* "*S'en coiffe.*" The copy reads, "*s'encoiffe,*" from improperly joining the words *s'en* and *coiffe*, although they are carefully separated in the MS.

CHAPTER IV.

THE GREATNESS AND THE MISERY OF MAN;

SYSTEMS OF THE PHILOSOPHERS, ETC.

EDITORIAL NOTICE.

These Fragments upon "Greatness and Misery," which finish, and, in a manner, sum up the portraiture of man's condition, bore in the author's mind an intimate relation to those remarks which he had penned upon the opinions of the philosophers. Both were intended to serve as introductory to his development of the Christian religion; and on that account we combine them in the same chapter, as an appropriate conclusion to the first part of the apologetical treatise of the writer.

Upon the plan laid down by Pascal, in fact, it is by means of a deep study of ourselves only that we arrive at a knowledge of true religion. Having presented to his reader everything that man is capable of knowing of himself, he proceeded to challenge the systems of philosophy, in order to learn whether there was anything in them which could satisfy the cravings of the human heart, appease its innate desires after truth and happiness, and, above all, solve the mystery of that complex character of greatness and misery which is inherent in his present state of existence. Then, after apostrophizing in vain these philosophers, he applies himself to the investigation of the Christian system: there he sees the reality of that good, of which, elsewhere, he had been only deceived by the shadows; and finds the solution of man's inconsistencies of nature in the doctrine of his *original sin*.

After this exposure of the philosophical doctrines, Pascal proposed also * to investigate the variety of religious systems extant in the world; but this part of his plan was, unfortunately, never completed. He has left behind only some fragments upon Mahomet; and as these passages have for their object to exhibit the disparity between the prophet of the Mussulmans and the divine Founder of Christianity, we have introduced them at the close of the chapter, entitled, "Of Jesus Christ." (*French Editor.*)

* Miscellaneous Writings, p. 395.

GREATNESS AND MISERY OF MAN.

I. † *Description of Man.*

Dependence, love of independence, necessitousness.

II. † *The Corruption of his Nature.*

† Man, in no part of his conduct, follows that reason which constitutes his true existence.

Intestine war carried on in man between his reason and his passions.

If he possessed only reason without passions . . .

If he possessed only passions without reason . . . .

But possessing actually both, he cannot be without conflicts,—being unable to preserve peace with the one without encountering hostility from the other. Thus is he divided and at variance in himself.

III. † *Misery.*

† Job and Solomon.

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† *Misery.*

Solomon and Job, of all men that ever lived, have best described the misery of man:—the one the most prosper-

ous, the other the most afflicted of beings; the one knowing, by experience, the vanity of pleasure,—the other, the reality of sorrows.

+ *Transitoriness.*

It is a fearful thing to see all our possessions disappearing.

IV. + *Wrong.* When presumption unites with misery, it is a sore wrong.

V. + *Greatness of Man.*

So exalted is our idea of the mind of man, that we cannot endure to be the object of its contempt, and not rather to stand well in its esteem; and all the happiness of men consists in this mutual good opinion.

That characteristic of man, which is, at once, the most unworthy and the most exalted, is his desire of glory. Whatever be his worldly possessions, whatever his personal advantages and enjoyments, he is restless and unsatisfied without the esteem of his fellow-men. So great is his value for the human mind, that, if he stand not well in its estimation,—whatever be his other satisfactions,—he is a stranger to content. That is his highest ambition; nothing can turn away his longing for this; it is the last passion that becomes extinct in the heart of man.*

And those who most despise mankind, and would fain degrade their race to the level of the beast, even they

* "The last infirmity of noble minds."—*Shakspeare.* (Transl.)

desire credit and admiration among them, and contradict by their conduct their professed principles. Nature, which is stronger than all, impresses them with a deeper conviction of the greatness of man, than their own shallow reasonings of his degradation.*

VI. This inconsistency in man is so palpable, that there are some who fancy we have two souls; a simple emotion appearing to them incapable of so great and sudden vicissitudes, from unmeasured presumption to a fearful depression of the spirit.

VII. Notwithstanding the contemplation of all the miseries with which we are surrounded, touching us so intimately,† there is in us an irrepressible instinct, which seems to raise us above them.

VIII. + *The greatness of man.*

+ The greatness of man is so evident, that it is deducible even from his misery. For that which is the natural state of animals we call misery in man; by which we acknowledge that, our nature being now similar to that of animals, we have fallen from a better nature which he once possessed.

Who is unhappy at not being a King, except one who has been deposed? Was Paulus Emilius unhappy at being no longer consul? On the contrary, every one saw

* This passage is not to be found in the MS.

† Orig. "*Qui nous tiennent à la gorge;*" an expression borrowed from Montaigne.

he was happy in having held the office, because the condition of holding it was that it should not be perpetual. Perseus, on the other hand, was so unhappy at ceasing to be a King, because the office was a permanent one, that it was thought strange that he could endure existence.* Who is discontented to have only one mouth? yet who would not be unhappy at having but one eye? No one would be concerned at not possessing three eyes; but we should be inconsolable to be without any.

IX. † It is feeling only that makes us unhappy. A house in ruins is not so. Man alone is conscious of misery. "*Ego vir videns.*"†

The greatness of man is seen the more plainly, in that he knows himself to be miserable. A tree knows nothing of the kind.

It is a misery to feel our misery, but it is also a mark of greatness to know it.

All his miseries prove his greatness. There are the sorrows peculiar to the aristocrat; others peculiar to a deposed Sovereign.

X. † *A. P. R.*‡ *Greatness and misery.*

As misery results from greatness, and yet greatness is

* At page 83, MS., is the following note:—"Perseus, king of Macedon. Paulus Emilius reproached him that he did not kill himself."

† This is found only in the copies. (Lament. Jeremiah, Ch. iii. v. 1.)

‡ See note, page 152.

shown in that very misery, some have inferred the existence of the misery still more strongly from regarding the greatness to be the proof of it; and others inferring yet more forcibly the greatness, inasmuch as they have deemed it proved by the misery, all that the one class has advanced in support of the greatness has but furnished arguments to the other in proof of the misery, since a descent seems the greater in proportion to the previous elevation. Thus they argue conversely, and oppose each other's views in a perpetual circle; each feeling, that in proportion as men are enlightened, they see in themselves both greatness and misery. In a word, man knows that he is miserable. He is miserable in being so; but he is great in knowing it.

XI. † *Thought constitutes the Greatness of Man.*

I can conceive a man without hands, or feet, or head; for it is only from experience we learn that the head is more necessary than the feet: but I cannot conceive of man without *thought;* he would then be a stone, or a brute.

It is thought, then, which constitutes man's being, and without which no conception can be formed of it. What is that in us by means of which we experience pleasure? Is it the hand? Is it the arm? The flesh? The blood? It is plain that it must be something immaterial.*

* This paragraph, which appears in the edition of 1670, is not in either the MS. or the copy, and appears to us to be an addition by the first Editors.

XII. *A Reed possessing thought.*

+ It is not in any material space which I occupy, that I must seek my true dignity, but in the regulation of my thoughts. The possession of the earth would not herein add to my greatness. As to space, the universe encloses and absorbs me as a mere point; by thought, I can embrace it!

H. 3.

Man is but a reed,—the feeblest of created things,—but one possessing thought. It needs not that the universe should arm itself to crush him. A breath, a drop of water suffices for his destruction. But were the whole universe thus to rise against him, man is greater than it, because he *knows* that he dies; and though the universe should thus be his destroyer, it is unconscious of its power.

All our dignity then consists in thought. Thence is our real elevation: not in space, which we cannot fill; nor in duration, which is nothing. Let us aim to *think* well: that is the source of all true morality.*

XIII. Man is obviously formed for thought; it constitutes all his dignity, and all his value; and his great duty is to order his thought aright. Now that order is, to begin with himself, then to proceed to his Author, and, last, to remember his end.

Yet what is it which, with the world, forms the subject of thought? Nothing of all this; but to dance,

* This passage, which appears in most of the editions, in nearly the same terms, is not found in the autograph MS., but in the copies only.

to play, to sing, to make verses, to run a round of gay amusement; or to build houses, to gain elevated rank; while nothing is thought of the duties of station, or the destinies of man!

XIV. [*] *Thought.*

[*] Man's whole dignity consists in thought.

Thought, then, is in its nature an admirable thing; nothing is to be compared with it. It must be mingled with great faults in order to become contemptible. But such it too often is; and then it is justly a subject of ridicule.

How great is it in its primitive state! How debased through its defects!

XV. It is a dangerous thing to demonstrate to man how he resembles the brutes, without at the same time showing him his superiority over them. It is also dangerous to inculcate too strongly upon him his dignity, without letting him see his degradation. It is still more dangerous to keep him in ignorance of the one and the other. And it is equally advantageous to him to get a correct knowledge of both.

— Man ought not to think himself on a level with the brutes, nor equal to the angels; neither ought he to be ignorant of the nature of either: but he should know in what respects his condition resembles both. [†]

[*] Here Pascal has added in the MS., (but erased,) as a kind of afterthought and comment,—"But what is this thought? O, how absurd!"

[†] This paragraph is not in the autograph, but the copies.

XVI. + *Greatness. Misery.**

+ In proportion as man is enlightened, he sees more of the greatness and the misery of his condition.

+ The generality of men . . .

+ Those who are most elevated . . .

+ Philosophers . . . .

+ They astonish the generality of men.

+ Christians.—They are the astonishment of philosophers.

+ Who can be surprised, then, to find that religion does no more than thoroughly convince of truths, which become the more evident in proportion as the mind is enlightened?

XVII. Pride outweighs and absorbs all the evils that afflict us. It is a mystery, an extravagance, a delusion! It puts a man wholly out of his proper place, and fills him with restlessness to find it again. This is a universal case. Where is an exception to be found?

+ Without examining every particular occupation, it is sufficient to class them all under the head of amusements.

+ For philosophers, 280 kinds of sovereign good! †

XVIII. This is all that they have been able to devise as a remedy for so many evils. It is, at best, a *miserable consolation*, since it does not aim to cure *the disease, but merely to conceal it for a time*; and,

* The following seem to be mere rough memoranda found in the MS. (Transl.)

† In the copy only.

in so doing, the radical cure is altogether lost sight of. Thus, by a strange anomaly in man's nature, it is found that weariness, (*ennui*,) which is his greatest affliction, becomes, in a certain sense, his truest blessing; because it tends more than anything else to send him to the only effectual means of cure: while amusement, which he regards as his greatest comfort, is in reality his enemy; inasmuch as it utterly disinclines him to seek the true remedy for his trouble. Both these things furnish proof of the misery and degeneracy of man, while they exhibit his greatness also; inasmuch as we should not experience this weariness, and be driven into all this variety of occupations, were it not that there is an innate idea in the mind of man of that happiness which he has lost; and which, seeking in vain in himself, he hopes to derive from external objects, without ever attaining to true satisfaction. That is to be found, not in ourselves, nor in any created object, but in God alone.*

XIX. Man knows not to what rank in creation to assign himself. He sees himself to have wandered and fallen from his proper place, without the power to return. He anxiously gropes in every direction to regain it, but is baffled by impenetrable darkness.

XX. We are desirous of truth, but find only uncertainty. We are ever seeking happiness, and find nothing but misery and death.

* This passage is not found in any MSS. that we have examined. It was published, however, in the earliest edition; and it bears marks of the style of Pascal, which cannot be mistaken.

We are unceasingly pursuing truth and happiness, yet are incapable of the real enjoyment of either.

These desires have been left within us, not less as a punishment of sin, than to make us ever conscious from whence we have fallen!

XXI. † *Feebleness.*

All men's labours are directed to the acquisition of property. Yet would they be unable to show any just title to their possessions; for they hold them only by the caprice of men, and have no power effectually to defend them.

It is the same with knowledge; for disease can deprive us of it.

— † We are incapable of discovering truth, or possessing real good.

† All men's labours are directed to the acquisition of property; yet have they no title to possess it with justice, nor power to hold it with security. So is it with knowledge and pleasure. We possess neither truth nor good. *

XXII. When children become scared at the sight of some hideous figure they have dressed up, † we see it to

* This last paragraph seems to be the rudimental thought which is developed in the one immediately preceding; and, like many other of the imperfect passages which the diligence of the Editor has discovered and preserved in this volume, is chiefly valuable as exhibiting the species of mental elaboration by which Pascal arrived at his more finished and digested axioms. (Transl.)

† Montaigne says:—"*C'est pitié que nous nous pipons de nos propres singeries et inventions,*—'quod finxere timent,'—*comme les enfants qui s'effrayent de ce mesme visage qu'ils ont barbouillé et noircy à leur compagnon.*"—Book ii., chap. 12.

be a child's trick; but the same follies are played off, only on a larger scale, in advanced age. It is the method and fancy only that are changed.

" — + Whatever advances by degrees to maturity, decays also progressively. That which has been originally weak can never become absolutely strong. We say, such a thing has grown, has changed; yet it remains, in reality, the same.

XXIII. + Sensuality has become so natural to us, as to be a second nature. Thus are there in us two natures;—the one good, the other evil. . . Where then is God? There, where *you* are not; and the kingdom of God is within you.—*Rabins.*

XXIV. + *Contrarieties.*

+ Man is by nature credulous and incredulous; timid and rash.

+ See our contradictoriness: we despise our existence; we hate our being; we throw away life for nothing!

+ *Contradiction.*

Pride is the counterpoise to our miseries. Either it casts a veil over them; or, if it reveal them, boasts in having them known.

+ O the degradation of man! To place himself below—yea, to adore the very beasts that perish!

XXV. If he boast, I will abase him; if he abase himself, I will exalt him: thus will I meet him with perpetual contradiction, till he shall see that he is an incomprehensible being,—a monster in creation!

XXVI. † *Contrarieties; after showing the degradation and the greatness of man.*

Let man now hold himself at his true worth. Let him regard himself with complacency, in possessing a nature capable of good; with aversion, on account of the unworthiness mingled with it. Let him despise himself for the abortiveness of his powers; but moderate his contempt in consideration of their original greatness. How can it be otherwise than that disesteem and admiration should thus alternate in him? He is capable of knowing truth, and attaining to happiness; but he possesses neither truth, constancy, nor peace.

My desire is, in order to engage him in the search after truth, that he should disenthral himself from prejudices, follow truth where she leads the way, and abhor those lusts which shut her out from his view, blind him to his real welfare, and impede every good purpose and determination.*

XXVII. If man is not formed for God, why is he only happy when united to God?

If man is formed for God, why is he so opposed to God?

* In the copies, but not in the autograph MS.

SYSTEMS OF THE PHILOSOPHERS.

STOICS, ATHEISTS, PYRRHONISTS, ETC.

I. The philosophers propounded no sentiments adapted to the two-fold condition of man.

They sought to inspire emotions of pure greatness; and this is not man's condition.

They inspired emotions of pure degradation; this also is not man's condition.

Man needs abasement; and that, not excited merely by natural emotions, but by a sense of penitence; not that he should remain perpetually in his low estate, but that he should rise from it to greatness. He needs to be made to feel his greatness, not of merit but of grace, and after duly passing through the probation of abasement.

II. This intestine war between reason and passion has led to the formation, in the way of compromise, of two sects. The one has aimed to teach men to extinguish passion, and become gods; the other, to renounce the rule of reason, and become brute-beasts:—these latter are Barreauxs.* But neither of them has been success-

* It is well known that Barreaux, the real or supposed author of the famous sonnet, "*Grand Dieu, tes jugements sont remplis d'équité;*" *&c.*, was a great lover of play, conviviality, and pleasure, and, according to Tullement, inculcated Atheism. (See Note at Thought No. LVIII., Miscellaneous Writings, pp. 210, 211.) Pascal had very probably met him in society in the same circle where he had become acquainted with Miton and the Chevalier de Méré.

ful; and reason ever exists, in the one class to challenge the baseness and culpability of the passions, and disturb their tranquillity in the indulgence of them; while the passions are as constantly reviving in those who ineffectually aim to subdue them.

III. The three kinds of concupiscence have formed three sects; the philosophers have done nothing more than follow some one or other of them.

IV. † All their principles are true, — pyrrhonists, stoics, atheists, &c. But their conclusions are false, because the opposite principles are true also.

V. Human nature is to be regarded under two aspects: the one, its ultimate purpose and destination, which are incomparably great; the other, its actual state in the case of multitudes; as we judge of the tendencies—"*et animum arcendi*"—of horses and dogs: here we behold man abject and vile. From these two different views arise the variety of our judgments, and the endless controversies of philosophers.

The one in fact denies the assumption of the other. The one says, Man is not born to this end and aim; the other says, He diverges from it when he follows courses so ignoble.

VI. † *Stoics.*

They maintain, that a thing can be at all times done which can sometimes be done; and that since the desire

of glory, though partial in its degree, is capable of inciting its possessor to good deeds, it must necessarily do the same with all persons.

These, however, are mere feverish movements, which health is incapable of imitating.

† The conclusion which Epictetus comes to is, that, as we see some instances of great religious constancy, all must be alike constant.

VII. † How difficult and how futile are the tenets of the stoics!

— † These people fancy that all who have not attained to the highest degree of wisdom, are in the same degree foolish and vicious; as those who are two inches below the surface . . . .

VIII. The stoics say, Enter into your own selves; there you will find peace. This is not true.

Others say, Get out of yourselves; seek happiness in amusement. This again is not true. Can sickness be banished?

Happiness is neither without nor within ourselves: it is in God; and, in him, both without and within ourselves.

IX. † Philosophers have consecrated vices in attributing them to God himself. Christians consecrate virtues.

X. † The fallacy of philosophers, who have not ques-

tioned the immortality of the soul! The fallacy of their dilemma in Montagne.*

This is indubitable: the question whether the soul is mortal or immortal, is, of all others, the most momentous of all in respect of morals; yet have the philosophers treated of morals altogether independently of this.

— † Their discussions are the mere frivolities of the liour . . . .

— † Plato to incline to Christianity. . . . . .

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† Immateriality of the soul:—philosophers have succeeded in subduing the passions; what mere matter could have done it?†

XI. † *Philosophers.*

† We abound in influences which urge us beyond ourselves.

Natural instinct makes us feel that happiness is not to be found within ourselves. Our passions drive us abroad, and external objects present themselves for their gratification: they lure and invite us, when even our thoughts do not tend towards them. In the face of all this, philosophy has cried, "Enter within yourselves,

* The following is the passage to which Pascal here alludes:—"*Ils ont ce dilemme tousjours en la bouche, pour consoler notre mortelle condition: ou l'áme est mortelle, ou immortelle; si mortelle, elle sera sans peine; si immortelle, elle ira en amendant. Ils ne touchent jamais l'autre branche: quoy, si elle va en empirant? Et laissent aux poètes les menaces des peines futures. Mais par là ils se donnent un beau jeu...*" Essay, Book ii., ch. xii.

† The original of this passage is imperfect in construction. (Transl.)

there is your happiness." She is disbelieved; and those who believe her, are only the empty and the foolish.

XII. † *Philosophers.*

† I know not which is the most extravagant,—to tell a man who knows not, or one who knows himself, that he should, of his own choice, go to God!

XIII. † *Philosophers.*

They hold that God is alone worthy to be loved and admired, while *they* desire to be loved and admired of men; and yet they are ignorant of their own corruption. If they are indeed conscious of a supreme desire to love and admire Him, and find in this their chief satisfaction, let them think well of themselves. But if they are averse to such things, if their * only aim is to stand well in the esteem of man, and without exercising constraint over their inclination, endeavour notwithstanding to make them seek their happiness in loving themselves,—then, I say, their fancied perfection is guilt. They profess to know God; yet it is not only their endeavour that men should make *them* the object of attachment, but† that they should rest in them, and make them their final aim for enjoyment and happiness!

XIV. † *Search after true happiness.*

† Most men hold that worldly good consists in fortune, and external advantages; or, at best, in amuse-

* "*S'ils n'ont.*" MSS. "*S'il n'a.*"
† "*Mais,*" wanting in the MS.

ments. Philosophers have set themselves to show the vanity of this, and have placed it—wherever they could!

[+] *Disputes respecting the Supreme good.*

[+] "*Ut sis contentus temetipso et ex te nascentibus bonis.*" See the inconsistency of this; for these very men will afterwards advise us to kill ourselves. O happy existence, from which we are to seek escape like a pestilence! *

XV. [+] It is well to feel worn and fatigued with the fruitless search after true happiness, that we may welcome our deliverer.

[+] I would not suffer a man to rest in this or the other of his fellow-men, that thus finding himself without support or repose. . . . .†

XVI. [+] *Pyrrhonism (or Scepticism).*

I propose here to note down my thoughts without regular sequence, and yet not perhaps confusedly or without method: it is, in fact, the true method which I adopt, and that which will assist my design by its apparent disorder.

[+] I should confer too much honour upon my subject, were I to treat it with regularity, because I mean to

* In the copies only. For the development of this thought, see Montaigne, Book ii., chap. 2.

† This sentence is incomplete, and is immediately followed in the MS. by this line, the meaning of which is not discoverable:—"*Les enfants étonnés voient leurs camarades respectés.*"

show that it is a thing of which it is, in itself, incapable.

XVII. It has been customary to imagine Plato and Aristotle only as certain dignified Professors, clothed in robes of office. Now, they were, in reality, nothing more than good sort of people, like the generality of men, living sociably with their friends, and making themselves happy among them. When they laid down their rules and their system of policy, they did it for their amusement. It was the least philosophical and serious part of their lives. The highest effort of their philosophy was to live simply, and in tranquillity.

+ When they touched upon politics, it was as if they were setting about to regulate an asylum for lunatics. And if they affected to descant upon them as matters of importance, it was because they knew the madmen they addressed dreamed that they were themselves Kings and Emperors. They entered into their principles, in order to moderate their folly with as little injury as possible.*

XVIII. + *Pyrrhonism.*

Everything here is in part true, and in part false. It is not so with essential truth;—that is wholly pure, and without any mixture of falsehood. It is this alloy which dishonours and destroys truth. Nothing is perfectly true, and therefore nothing is true at all, measured by the standard of perfect truth. It will be said, for instance, homicide is wrong: true, for we know what is wrong and false. But who will say, what is right? Is

* The outline of this passage seems to be adopted from Montaigne.

chastity?* I say no; for then the world would come to an end. Is marriage, then? No: continence is better. Is it, *not* to kill? No: for then outrages would multiply, and the wicked would destroy the good. To kill then? No: nature revolts from this. We possess truth and good only partially, and both mingled with evil and falsehood.†

XIX. What surprises me most is, to observe how unconscious all are of their own incapacity. We adopt our various proceedings with great seriousness; and every one takes his course, not because it is in itself good, or as under the influence of custom and fashion, but as if he clearly discerned its reasonableness and justice. We continually find ourselves deceived; and, with amusing humility, fancy it is through some mistake of our own, and not from any deficiency of our instruments, which we fondly boast are adequate. Yet it is as well that there are so many of this kind of persons in the world, who are not sceptics through the mere vanity of professing sceptical tenets; because by this means it is demonstrated, that men are capable of holding the most extravagant opinions; and may be found to indulge the fancy, that instead of labouring under a natural and irremediable impotency, they are endued by nature with discernment and wisdom!

† Nothing fortifies scepticism more than this,—that there are sceptics in profession, who are not so in reality. If all were really such, all would be seen to be wrong.

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* "*Chasteté.*" In the sense of *continence*, as it immediately afterwards occurs. (Transl.)

† This passage is found in the MS., among the notes upon the Jesuits and Miracles.

+ This sect is stronger by means of its enemies than of its friends; for man's weakness appears much more plainly in those who are unconscious, than in those who are conscious of it.

XX. + It is possible that there may be some true demonstrations; but it is not certain. This, therefore, proves nothing, unless it be, that it is not certain that everything is uncertain; and this is to the advantage of Pyrrhonism. (Erased.)

XXI. + *Pyrr.**

An extreme measure of intelligence is apt to be branded with folly, as well as an extreme deficiency. Nothing passes thoroughly well but mediocrity. This is the rule laid down by the generality, who carp at all who deviate from it into either of the extremes. For myself, I dispute not the point; I consent to be thus circumscribed; and refuse only to be assigned the lowest place of all,—not because it is *low*, but because it is the *lowest:* I should equally refuse the highest. It is to cease to be man, to quit this middle state. Instead of aiming to soar above it, true greatness of soul consists in knowing how to remain in it.

XXII. + *Instinct, Reason.*

We labour under an impotency of furnishing conclusive proofs of things, which is invincible to all dogmatism.

* Doubtless "*Pyrrhonism.*"

We have an innate idea of truth, which is invincible to all Pyrrhonism.

XXIII. + Heavens!* what absurd reasoning. Would God have created the world to damn it? Can he require such things of beings so feeble? &c. Pyrrhonism is the remedy for this evil, and will rebuke this vanity.

+ *Conversation.*

+ Great words for religion. I deny it.

+ *Conversation.*

+ Pyrrhonism subserves religion.

XXIV. Scepticism is truth: for, after all, before Jesus Christ, men knew not whence they came, nor what rank—whether great or little—they held in creation. And those who dogmatised as to the one or the other, knew nothing in reality of the matter, and threw out mere chance and random guesses. Besides this, they all erred in their mutual excommunication of the one or the other.

+ "*Quod ergò ignorantes quæritis, Religio annuntiat vobis.*"

XXV. Nothing is more strange in the nature of man, than the contrarieties he exhibits in all things. He is formed to discover truth; he ardently desires and

* "*Mon Dieu!*" This is the only instance that I remember of Pascal's using this kind of apostrophe in his writings; and it is here put into the mouth of a supposed caviller. (Transl.)

diligently seeks it; yet, when he tries to grasp it, so dazzled is he and confounded, that you at once believe him to be in error. This has given rise to the two sects of Pyrrhonists and Dogmatists,—the one of which would take from man all knowledge of truth, and the other aims to assure him of it; but both of them deal in such inconclusive reasonings, that they increase his confusion and embarrassment, while all the time he possesses no other light to guide him than that of unassisted nature.*

The strongest positions of the sceptics (I pass over the less important) are, that we have (apart from faith and revelation) no certainty of the truth of these principles, except in so far as we have a natural perception of them within ourselves. Now this natural sentiment is not a convincing proof of their truth; because, having no certainty, except through the light of faith, whether mankind was created by a beneficent Deity, by a malignant demon, or by mere chance, we are doubtful whether the principles we are thus endowed with be true, or false, or uncertain,—according as the view of our origin is thus variously held. Besides this, no one, (except by faith,) has any positive assurance whether he wakes or sleeps; for, during sleep, we are capable of the strongest conviction that we are awake. We fancy we see space, figure, motion; we imagine time and dimension; in fact, we seem to act exactly as if we were awake. So that—as the half of our life is passed in sleep, actual or apparent—we have no real idea of truth; but all our sentiments are delusive. Who shall say, that the other moiety of our existence, wherein

* This paragraph is not either in the MS. or the copy.

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we think we are awake, is not another kind of sleep, slightly different only from the former, from which we awake when we think we are falling asleep?

+ And who can doubt, that if we were to dream in company with others, and—as might often occur—if our dreams were to bear a resemblance to each other, while we found ourselves alone when awake, that we might not then fancy the two things reversed? In fact, as we often dream that we dream, heaping one dream upon another, it is very probable that this life itself may be no more than a dream, upon which others are engrafted, from which we awake only at death; and during which we are conscious of as little of the principles of truth and happiness as during natural sleep; those various cogitations by which we are agitated being perhaps only illusions, similar to our notion of the lapse of time, and other vain fancies which we experience in our dreams.* (Erased.)

* At p. 381 of the MS. there are also the following reflections:—"If we were every night to dream the same things, they would affect us as much as objects that we had seen in the day; and were an artizan certain of dreaming every night, during twelve hours together, that he was a King, I believe he would be as happy as a King, who should during every night for twelve hours dream he was an artizan.

"If we were every night to dream that we were pursued by enemies, and agitated by disquieting fancies, at the same time that our days were passed in various occupations,—travelling or otherwise,—we should suffer almost as much as if those dreams were realities, and should be as fearful of falling into sleep as we are of awaking, when we are really anticipating the entering upon such calamities. In fact, the illusion would be well-nigh as painful as the reality. But as dreams are so various and diversified, our impressions from them are not as strong as those of our waking hours, on account of the greater continuity of the latter—which, however, is not an entire and unbroken one; but the transition is less abrupt, and sometimes less frequent also, than in travelling. On those occasions we exclaim, 'I seem to dream.' Thus life is a dream, only a little less mutable."

+ These are the principal points on both sides.

I leave untouched the lesser ones, such as the declamation of the Pyrrhonists* against the impressions of custom, education, manners, country, and other similar matters; which, although they weigh with the majority of men, who reason upon false premises, are overthrown by the lightest breath of Pyrrhonism. + We have but to inspect their books, if we cannot otherwise be convinced: our doubts will then be soon resolved,—perhaps only too effectually.

I place my finger upon one position only of the dogmatists, which is, that, speaking with truth and sincerity, it is impossible to have any doubt of natural principles.

+ To which the Pyrrhonists simply oppose the uncertainty of our origin, which includes that of our nature. To this the dogmatists have yet to make an effectual reply, and will have, while the world lasts.

This is the contest which is interminably going on among men; a contest in which all must take a part, and range themselves on the side of dogmatism or Pyrrhonism; for † any one remaining neuter, must be pre-eminently a Pyrrhonist. Such neutrality is the very essence of factiousness: whoever is not against them, is incontestably for them. They are not for themselves; they are no party;—indifferent, oscillating between all, not even excepting themselves.

What then is man to do in such a case? Is he to

* The text is here adhered to, but the sense of the passage seems to require "*dogmatists*." (Transl.)

† Pascal at first wrote,—"For that neutrality which is affected by the wise, is the most ancient dogma of the Pyrrhonist cabal."

doubt of everything?—Doubt whether he is awake, whether he is pricked with a pin, or burnt with an iron? Shall he doubt that he doubts? doubt that he exists? We cannot go so far as this: and then I assert there has never been such a thing as real, perfect scepticism. Nature comes to the aid of reason in her weakness, and suffers her not to fall into extravagancies so palpable.

Shall it, on the other hand, be said, that man possesses the certainty of truth?—man, who, however slightly pressed, can show no foundation for the boast, and must at once surrender his pretension?

See then the mystery of man! What a being of crudities,—what a monster,—a chaos!—what a compound of contradictions,—a prodigy! The master of all knowledge,—an abject worm of the earth; the depositary of truth,—the sink * of uncertainty and doubt: behold him, at once, the glory and the opprobrium of the universe! †

How is this entanglement to be unravelled? Nature confounds the sceptic, and reason the dogmatist.‡ Where, O man, shall end all your vain researches into

* "*Cloaque;*" this word is effaced in the St. Germain des Prés copy, and replaced in Arnauld's writing, by the word "*amas,*" which has been continued in the subsequent editions.

† This fine passage will recall to mind Shakspeare's apostrophe on the same subject; although the poet, instead of placing in contrast the conflicting features in man, gives only the flattering side of the picture,—"What a piece of work is man! how noble in reason! how infinite in faculties! in form and moving, how express and admirable! in action, how like an angel! in apprehension, how like a God! the beauty of the world; the paragon of animals!" (Transl.)

‡ This stood at first,—"We cannot be Pyrrhonists without violating nature; we cannot be dogmatists without renouncing nature."

your real condition, by the force of natural reason only? You cannot but fall into one or other of these sects; you cannot remain permanently in either.

Learn, then, O proud being, the paradox which you constitute! Humble yourself, vain reason! be silent, weak nature! Know how man infinitely surpasses man; receive from your great Master that secret of your true condition of which you are so ignorant. † Listen to the words of God!*

For, truly, if man had never fallen, he would, in his innocence, have enjoyed all the certainty that happiness and truth could confer. On the other hand, had he never been otherwise than fallen, he could have had no conception at all of truth or happiness. But such is our misfortune,—and it is so much the greater on account of the original dignity of our condition,—we have an idea of happiness, yet are unable to realize it; we form conceptions of truth, but possess only falsehood: incapable alike of absolute ignorance or of certain knowledge, we exhibit evidence of the perfection we once possessed, in the very depth of our unhappy fall!

Yet how astonishing is the fact, that the mystery, of all others the most profound in the whole circle of our experience, namely, the transmission of original sin, is

* In the place of these two paragraphs, Pascal at first wrote the following passage, which is subsequently erased in the MS.:—"Who shall unravel this entanglement? Unquestionably this exceeds the power of dogmatism or Pyrrhonism, or all worldly philosophy. Man surpasses man. Grant to the Pyrrhonists their favourite position,—that truth is not our business or within our power; that she is not to be found on earth; that her seat is in heaven; that she dwells in the bosom of God; and that she can only be known, in so far as He pleases to reveal her. Learn we then from Truth, uncreated and incarnate, our real nature."

that of which, from ourselves, we can gain no knowledge. It is not to be doubted, that there is nothing more revolting to our reason than to maintain, that the first man's sin should have entailed guilt upon those whose remoteness from the original source had seemed to render them incapable of its participation. Such transmission appears to us not only impossible, but even unjust. For what can be more opposed to the laws of man's poor justice, than eternally to condemn an infant incapable of free-will, for a sin in which he had so little share, that it was committed six thousand years before he came into existence? * Nothing, assuredly, is more repugnant to us than this doctrine; yet, without this mystery, of all others the most incomprehensible, we are incomprehensible to ourselves. Through this abyss it is, that the whole tangled thread of our condition takes its mazy and devious way; and man is actually more inconceivable, apart from this mystery, than the mystery itself is inconceivable by man. †

* It may admit of doubt whether, by the expression "condemn eternally an infant incapable of free-will," &c., "*damner éternellement un enfant incapable de volonté*," the writer may have meant an *infant* not having passed the age of infancy, or *infancy* as the first stage of all existence, but subsequently developed into adult and rational age, which, through original sin, is thus liable to condemnation. If the former must be understood, the opinion, although not held by Pascal alone, can be resolved only into very mistaken views of the divine attributes; and, as far as I am able to read the language of Scripture, finds no countenance from its gracious and benevolent revelations. (Transl.)

† At the end of this paragraph, Pascal had written what follows, but afterwards erased:—"Whence it appears, that God designing to render the difficulty of our existence unintelligible to ourselves, has placed the mystery so high, or more properly, so low, as to render it impossible for us to solve it; so that it is not by the proud efforts of our reason, but by her unhesitating submission, that we can truly know ourselves.

"These conclusions, firmly grounded on the inviolable authority of

XXVI. The doctrine of original sin is folly in the eyes of men; but it is *as such* only that it is propounded. Reproach me not with its opposition to reason, for it is as being opposed to reason that I hold it. Yet is this folly wiser than all the wisdom of men: *sapientius est hominibus.** For, without this, who will say what man is? His whole condition depends upon this point, so imperceptible to mere human view. And how could it ever have been discerned by reason, seeing it is a thing utterly beyond her apprehension; and reason, so far from being able to devise such a doctrine, shrinks from it confounded, when brought into contact with it?†

XXVII. ‡ Shall it be said that justice has forsaken the earth, because man has known original sin? "*Nemo antè obitum beatus est;*" that is, real and essential happiness commences not until death.‡

religion, lead us to see that there are two great articles of belief equally certain:—the one, that man in his primitive state of being, or in that of grace, is exalted above the natural creation, endued with a resemblance to God, and made a partaker of his divine nature; the other, that in his state of corruption and sin, he is fallen from that state, and become like the brute. These two propositions are equally certain and true. Scripture plainly declares them in saying, "*Deliciæ meæ esse cum filiis hominum. Effundam spiritum meum super omnem carnem. Dii estis,*" &c. And again, "*Omnis caro fœnum. Homo assimilatus est jumentis insipientibus et similis factus est illis. Dixi in corde meo de filiis hominum* [*ut probaret eos Deus et ostenderet similes esse bestiis.*]"—Eccles. iii.

"From all which it plainly appears that man is rendered by grace like to Deity, and made a partaker of his divinity, and, without grace, is like the brute."

* "*Quod stultum est Dei sapientius est hominibus.*"—1 Cor. i. 25.

† In the copy only.

‡ This passage is obscure, and apparently imperfect in the original. (Transl.)

XXVIII. [+] *Against Pyrrhonism.**

We fancy† that all persons apprehend these things‡ in the same manner, but it is a gratuitous supposition, and one resting on no proof. I see, indeed, that certain terms are applied on like occasions, and that whenever two men see a body change its place, they both express their perception of the object by the same word; each stating of the object that it has moved; and from this conformity of application a strong conjecture is raised of a conformity in idea. But this is not absolutely conclusive as to the latter point, although there is much to be said in its favour; for it is well known that the same conclusions are often drawn from different premises.

[+] This is sufficient, at least, to perplex the matter; not that it absolutely extinguishes the natural light, which assures us of those things that the academicians have mastered. But it tarnishes their achievements, and disturbs the dogmatists, to the triumph of the sceptical cabal, which deals much in this ambiguous ambiguity,§ and a sort of doubtful obscurity, which our scepticism cannot deprive of all its clearness, nor our natural illumination wholly clear from the darkness in which it is enveloped.‖

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* A mark of reference here on the top of the page in MS. at the left, and the figure 2 on the right, show that this passage is a sequel to another. This conjecture is confirmed by the following lines which commenced at first the passage, but were afterwards erased:—"It is, then, strange that we cannot define these things without rendering them obscure."

† "*Que tous les conçoivent de même:*" the copies have, "*Que tous les hommes conçoivent de même;*" which is inaccurate.

‡ Orig. "*Les,*" that is, doubtless, the things referred to in the preceding, but lost paragraph.

§ Orig. "*Cette ambiguité ambiguë.*"

‖ On the reverse of this page of the MS. stands "*La raison.*" And the copy adds, in the margin, "It is strange then that we cannot define without obscuring."

XXIX. We acquire a knowledge of truth, not only by the force of reason, but by our feelings: it is of the latter sort that we have the first principles in ourselves; and it is these which reason vainly attempts to combat, seeing she has, in fact, nothing to do with them. The sceptics, who make this their only object, spend their labours uselessly in it. We know that here we are not deceived, however incapable we may be of establishing our positions by reason: this inability proves nothing more than the weakness of reason,—not, as our opponents pretend, the uncertainty of our convictions. Our knowledge of first principles, such as that there is *space, time, movement, numbers,* is as strong as any of those revelations which we derive from reason. It is upon these attestations of feeling and instinct that reason must rest, and by them all her deductions must be supported. Our senses tell us that there are three dimensions in space, and that numbers are infinite; and reason afterwards demonstrates, that there are no two square numbers the one of which is double the other. Principles are felt; propositions are believed; and in both we arrive at certainty, although by different paths. And it is equally absurd for reason to require the senses to furnish proofs of their first principles, before they can be admitted, as for the senses to require of reason a feeling of all her propositions, before they should be received.

This kind of imperfection ought then only to have the effect of inculcating humility upon the reasoning powers, in their pretensions to apprehend all things; but not to invalidate our certainty of conviction, as if reason alone could be our instructress. Would to God that we could,

on the contrary, dispense with her aid altogether, and attain to a universal knowledge by instinct and feeling alone! But nature has denied us this boon, and, indeed, furnished us with very little intelligence of this description: every other kind of knowledge is to be acquired by reasoning only."

† And it is on this account, that those to whom God has dispensed sentiments of religion, by means of the feelings and the heart, are greatly blessed, and possess in them the most legitimate sources of conviction. But there are others not so favoured, whom we can only convince of the truth by the means of the understanding; while we must patiently await the power of the Almighty to touch the heart. Without this, belief is a mere human endowment, and inefficacious for the salvation of the soul.

SECOND PART.

HAPPINESS OF MAN WITH GOD,

OR,

A REMEDY FURNISHED BY REVELATION.

THE foregoing title, which indicates one of the two great divisions that Pascal intended to introduce into his "Apology for Christianity," is found written by his own hand, p. 25 of the MS. See article "Order," at the end of the volume.

(*French Editor.*)

† PREFACE

TO THE SECOND PART.*

I. † We will first speak of those who have heretofore treated of this subject.

I marvel at the boldness with which these persons presume to express themselves respecting the Deity, in their addresses to the unbelieving. Their first and great point is, to prove a God by the works of nature.

Now, I should feel no surprise at this mode of proceeding, if their arguments were addressed to believers; for it is certain, that those whose hearts are influenced by a lively faith plainly perceive, that all things around them are the work of that God whom they adore. As to those, however, in whom this illumination is extinguished, and in whom, yet, it is wished to revive its guiding fires, —persons destitute both of faith and grace; who, making every effort to explore, amidst the works of nature, something which may direct them to the knowledge of a God, find therein, nevertheless, nothing but clouds and darkness, —to tell such persons, that they have but to contemplate the simplest of the objects around them, and they will plainly discover in them a Divine hand; to refer them for proof, on this grand and momentous theme, to the revolutions of the moon or the planets; and then to fancy, that the sum of the evidences on which their belief is to rest is

* The fragments which are here collected under the title of "Preface," are all evidently with the same object; but it is only the first two which bear the title in the MS.

completed;—all this is only calculated, as reason and experience have both taught me, to awaken a suspicion that the proofs by which our religion is supported are miserably weak; and, instead of inspiring reverence for her high revelations, tends rather to bring them into contempt.

It is not after this manner that the scriptures teach. They better know the things which are of God. They tell us, that our God is a God who hides himself; that, since his nature became corrupted, man has been left in a state of blindness, from which he can only be extricated by Christ; and that, excepting through his mediation, all communication with Deity is interdicted: "*Nemo novit Patrem nisi Filius, et cui voluerit Filius revelare.*"*

This is what the Scripture indicates, where it is so often said that those who seek after God shall find him; † this is not to be understood as of that light which prevails in full mid-day; we do not say that those who seek the day at high-noon, or water in the ocean depths, shall find it; so, also, are not the evidences of a Deity such as mere nature furnishes. And thus it is, that it is said, "*Vere tu es Deus absconditus.*"†

II. *Preface.* — The metaphysical evidences of God are so subtle, and so remote from men's apprehension, that they carry little weight: and even if some persons are convinced by them, it is only temporarily; an hour after, they will be afraid they are under delusion.

* Matt. ii. 27.

† The whole of this passage, evidently dictated to an uninstructed person, shows in several parts, inaccuracies which arose from the inexperience of the amanuensis. For instance, instead of "*comme le jour en plein midi,*" it stood, "*comme du jour,*" &c.

— "*Quod curiositate cognoverint superbia amiserunt.*"

— † This is the result of a knowledge of God, not acquired through Jesus Christ. We first acquire a knowledge of God, and then communicate with him without a Mediator.

† Those, on the other hand, who have known God through a Mediator, entertain a just sense of their own helplessness.

III. Christ is the great object and centre of all things. Whoso knows him knows everything aright.*

Those who err, err only for want of perceiving the one of these two things:—we may know God, and be ignorant of our own misery; we may know our misery, and be ignorant of God: but we cannot know Jesus Christ, without being acquainted both with God, and with our misery.

Therefore it is, that I undertake not here to prove, from natural causes, the existence of God, or the doctrine of the Trinity, or the immortality of the soul, or any other matters of the like kind; not only because I should not think it practicable to find in the works of nature proofs sufficient to convince the hardened Atheist; but because, if I were so capable, the knowledge thus furnished, without a knowledge of Christ, would be barren and useless. Suppose a man to be convinced that the proportions of numbers constitute truths, immaterial, eternal, and dependent upon one primary truth, in which they have their origin, and which we call God;—such a man would, in my apprehension, be little advanced in the way of his soul's salvation.

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* This paragraph and the two that follow are in the copy only.

IV. It is a striking fact that no Canonical author has ever made use of the phenomena of nature for proofs of the Deity: they all lay down, as a doctrine, that He *is to be* believed in. David, Solomon, and others, never said, "There is no vacuum; therefore there is a God." They showed, herein, more skill than the ablest of their successors, who have made use of all these arguments.

+ This is very important.*

V. + If it be a mark of inaptitude to prove the existence of God from nature, acquit the Scripture of the error; if it be a mark of strength to have used a contrary method, prize Scripture the more for it.

VI. We shall never understand God aright, if we do not lay it down as a principle, that he has seen fit that some should be blind, and some should see.

VII. The God of Christians is not simply the source of geometrical truths, and of elementary order: such a Deity as this, is that of the Heathens and Epicureans. He is not merely a Being, who exercises his providential sway over the lives and destinies of men, to dispense happiness and prosperity to his worshippers: such was the object of Jewish adoration. But the God of Abraham, of Isaac, of Jacob,—the God of the Christian,—is a God of love, and of comfort. He is a God, who fills with his sacred influences those hearts of which he takes possession; one who inspires them with deep convictions, both of their own misery, and of his infinite compassion;

* This paragraph is only in the copy.

who enters into close and intimate union with the contrite soul; fills it with humility, joy, confidence, love; and renders it incapable of any other end or aim than Himself.*

VIII. Those who seek for God out of Christ, and rest in the evidences which nature furnishes, either find no solution of their enquiries, or settle down in a knowledge and service of God apart from a Mediator: thence they fall into either Atheism or Deism,—two things which the Christian religion almost equally abhors.

Without Jesus Christ the world could not subsist; for it would infallibly either be destroyed, or become like a Hell!†

If the world subsisted only to instruct man in the knowledge of God, his divinity would be reflected on all sides with incontestable evidence. But seeing it subsists only by, and for the sake of Jesus Christ, and for the purpose of instructing men in their ruined condition and the means of their salvation, all things furnish proofs of these two great truths. They show neither an entire absence, nor a manifest presence of Deity; but the presence of a God who hides himself: this character prevails throughout all creation.

IX. Ask him who knows nature only, whether he knows her not only to his unhappiness?

Alas! that he who alone knows her, should alone be unhappy!

It is not necessary that he should see nothing; it is

* In the copy only. † Idem.

not necessary that he should see enough to believe that he possesses her; but that he should see enough to know that he has lost her: for, to know that we have lost, we must see and not see; and this is precisely the very state of nature.*

X. Let me state what it is that I observe, and that disturbs me.

I look around me on all sides, and I see nothing but obscurity. Nature presents to me only matter of doubt and disquiet. If I could see in her nothing that furnished proof of a God, I should resolve to believe nothing. If I saw everywhere the traces of the Creator, I should settle down into a tranquil faith. As, however, I find in her evidence too great for denial, and too little for assurance, I feel myself embarrassed and distressed. I have wished a hundred times that, if nature be sustained by God, the marks of his hand might be more unequivocally exhibited; and that if such traces be deceitful, they might be altogether suppressed;—in short, that *everything* might be visible, or nothing; and thus I might know, which of these conflicting opinions ought to be embraced. In my present state, however, unknowing what I am, or what I ought to do, I can discern neither my condition nor my duty. My heart impels me earnestly to seek and to pursue the true good. Nothing would be to me too costly for Eternity.†

* In the copy only.

† This is evidently only intended to represent the perplexities of a mind in a state of nature, and unenlightened by Revelation; and it is one of those passages which have exposed Pascal to the shallow imputation of sceptical tendencies. (Transl.)

CHAPTER I.

THAT MAN, WITHOUT FAITH, CAN KNOW NEITHER TRUE HAPPINESS NOR RECTITUDE.

EDITORIAL NOTICE.

THE title we have given to this chapter is found in Pascal's own handwriting, at the head of a fragment which was evidently intended to form the opening of the Second Part of his great work.

At the end of this fragment, with which the first chapter commences, we have collected several pages, partly unpublished, which are dispersed promiscuously throughout the MS.; but which have an obvious connexion with this one fundamental idea,—that religion alone can give us a perfect knowledge of real happiness and true justice.

A considerable part of the reflections in this chapter are borrowed from the "*Apologie de Raymond de Sebonde*," of Montaigne. According to our usual habit, we have marked in notes, at the foot of the page, the passages so adopted by Pascal from the Author of the Essays. These appropriations, which have much interest in a literary point of view, show especially that Montaigne's writings served Pascal as a repository of worldly maxims, and a kind of history of the ancient philosophy. (*French Editor.*)

"THAT MAN, WITHOUT FAITH, CAN KNOW NEITHER TRUE HAPPINESS NOR RECTITUDE."

I. ALL men are seeking happiness: to this there is no exception. Different as may be the means employed, they all pursue the same end. That which urges one man to the battle-field, and leads another to remain at home in peace, is the same desire in both, acting by different tendencies.* The will of man takes not a single step in any direction, but for this purpose. It is the motive of every action, of every man in the world,—not excepting even him whose fancy it is to *hang* himself.

Notwithstanding all this, however, there has never existed a being since the world was created, who, without *religious* belief, has attained this object, to which all are perpetually aspiring. All are unhappy:—princes, subjects; nobles, commoners; young, and old; powerful, and weak; the wise, and the ignorant; the healthy, and the sick; the inhabitants of all countries, and men of all times, all ages, and all conditions.

An experience so long, so constant, and so uniform, might well convince us of our inability to attain to happiness by any efforts of our own: but example teaches in vain. It never runs so entirely parallel with

* Here follow these words in the MS., but erased:—"I write these lines, and another reads them, only because we have each a satisfaction in doing so."

our own case as to preclude some slight and subtle differences: and thence it is that we ever indulge the hope, that our own efforts will not be equally abortive with those of others.* Thus, while the present never satisfies, experience † is constantly deceiving us; and we are led on from one sorrow to another, till death fills up the eternal measure of our evils.

What is it, then, that this ceaseless round of desires, and their frustration, proclaims to us, but this:—that man once possessed true happiness, of which now nothing remains but the vain and empty traces; and that he fruitlessly endeavours to supply its place with the fugitive objects around him;—seeking from the future that comfort which he finds not in the present; and missing it in all things, because the infinite void can only be filled up by an infinite and unchangeable object, even by the Deity himself!

God alone is man's true good: and the instant He is forsaken, it is marvellous to see that there is nothing in the whole circle of natural things which is not thought to be capable of filling his place:—the starry heaven, the earth, the elements, plants, a cabbage, a leek; animals, insects, calves, serpents; fever, pestilence, war, famine, vice, adultery, incest! When once we have lost the real good, all things bear the appearance of good alike; even not excepting our own destruction, although so opposed to God, to reason, and to nature.

* "Comme *en l'autre.*" This stood "Comme *elle l'a été dans* l'autre."

† In the St. Germain copy, the word "*expérience*" here is replaced, in Nicole's writing, by that of "*espérance,*" which has been retained in the subsequent editions.

Some seek happiness in high station; * others, in the gratification of curiosity and science; others, in voluptuousness.

Others, again,—and they were nearer to their aim,—have believed that this universal good, the pursuit of every one, should not consist in any of those particular objects which can only be possessed by an individual; and which, when participated in by others, occasion to their owner more disturbance from the want of that part which he does not possess, than satisfaction from what is allotted to him. They have perceived that true happiness ought to consist in that which all may possess at once, without liability to decay, and exempt from mutual envy; and which none should be capable of losing, if desirous to retain it.

† And the reason for this is, that this desire being natural to man, being necessary to all, and that which they cannot dispense with, they conclude . . . . †

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† II. ‡ But this question, perhaps, surpasses the limit of reason: let us then examine its attainments in matters within its capacity. If there be anything of which a feeling of self-interest should have prompted the most determined pursuit, it is the universal good. Let us see then wherein these resolute and far-sighted spirits have

* "*L'autorité :*" at first "*la grandeur.*"

† Unfinished sentence: the conclusion not to be found either in the MS. or copies.

‡ This fragment is evidently only the sequel of a passage: the beginning is not found in the MS. or copy. In reality, however, this and the following seem only the substance of some passages from the chapter in Montaigne, entitled, "*Apologie de Raymond de Sebonde.*" The numerals are doubtless those of the pages in the Essays.

placed this blessing, and how far they are agreed among themselves in their conclusions respecting it. (Erased.)

† One says, the sovereign good lies in virtue, another in pleasure; one assigns it to science, and the study of nature, another to truth; "*Felix qui potuit rerum cognoscere causas;*" this man places it in total ignorance, that, in indolence; some in resisting external appearances, others in wondering at nothing: "*nihil mirari propè res una quæ possit facere et servare beatum.*"* The Pyrrhonists assign it to their perpetual hesitation and doubt; and others, somewhat wiser, think they can find out something better than that. Truly we have a goodly choice! (Erased.)

"

† To bring in the following article after "the laws."

If it must be evident that this specious philosophy has gained nothing of certainty after such long and laborious efforts, the mind will, perhaps, at length learn to know itself. Let us listen to the master spirits of the world upon this subject. What do they substantially think of it? (Erased.)

395.

What have they discovered of its origin, its duration, and its departure? (Erased.)

399.

III. † Does the soul still form too elevated a subject

* Montaigne, Book ii., ch. 12:—"*Les uns disent nostre bien estre loger en la vertu; d'autres en la volupté; d'autres au consentir à nature; qui en la science; qui à n'avoir point de douleur; qui à ne se laisser emporter*

for man's feeble intelligence? Degrade it then to mere matter; see whether it knows what it is that forms that body which it animates, and those others which it counterbalances and removes at its will. What is the knowledge of such things as those, that is possessed by these illustrious dogmatists, these men who profess to be ignorant of nothing? (Erased.)

393.

+ *Harum sententiarum.** (Erased.)

+ That would doubtless suffice if reason were reasonable. She is so to this point, that she will acknowledge she has hitherto discovered nothing with certainty; but she will not despair of doing this at some future period. On the contrary, she is as ardent as ever in her researches; and constantly believes she has in herself force sufficient for the achievement. We must then proceed with the investigation; and, after ascertaining the amount of her powers in their greatest effects, contemplate them in themselves, and see what are her means and resources for the discovery of truth. (Erased.)

IV. + Upon what would you found the economy of

aux apparences; et à cette fantaisie semble retirer cette autre de l'ancien Pythagoras:

"*Nil admirari propè res est una, Numici,*
Solaque, quæ possit facere et servare beatum."—Horace, Book i., Ep. 6.

* This is the beginning of a quotation in the following passage of Montaigne:—"*Il* (Aristotle) *ne parle ni de l'essence, ni de l'origine, ni de la nature de l'âme; mais en remarque seulement l'effet. Lactance, Sénèque et la meilleure part entre les dogmatistes, ont confessé que c'estoit chose qu'ils n'entendoient pas. Et après tout ce dénombrement d'opinions: 'Harum sententiarum quæ vera sit Deus aliquis viderit,' dit Cicero.*"

the world, which you propose to govern? Upon the caprices of individuals?—See the confusion you would introduce! Upon justice?—You know nothing of it.

Who can doubt, that if justice had been properly understood, no such maxim would ever have obtained, (although it is one the most universally prevalent,) as that every one should follow the customs of his own country? The omnipotence of true equity would have subjected all nations to its sway; and legislators would not have taken for their models, instead of the immutable principles of justice, the fancies and caprices of Persians and barbarians. We should have seen these principles established in every country, and throughout all times, instead of rules of justice or injustice, which change their aspect with every variety of climate. Three degrees of latitude shall reverse a whole system of jurisprudence. A difference of one meridian decides the question of truth or falsehood. After the lapse of a few years, fundamental laws are overthrown. Right has its epochs: the entry of Saturn into Leo marks the commencement of a crime. O happy code, which is bounded by the course of a river!* Truth on one side of the Pyrenees, error on the other!

† They acknowledge that justice herself does not reside in these national peculiarities, but in the principles of natural law common to all countries. Truly they

* Instead of as above, "*qu'une rivière borne!*" this was at first, "*que le trajet d'une rivière rend crime!*" These were Montaigne's expressions, Book ii., ch. 12:—"*Quelle bonté est-ce, que je voyais hier en crédit et demain ne l'estre plus, et que le traject d'une rivière fait crime? Quelle vérité est-ce que ces montagnes bornent, mensonge au monde qui se tient au delà?*"

would have maintained this point resolutely, if the accidents and chances which have given rise to human laws, had encountered any one which might be deemed universal; but so various is human caprice, that not one such is to be found.

Larceny, incest, infanticide, parricide,—all have been ranked among virtuous actions. Can anything be more absurd, than that a man shall be justified in killing me, because he resides on the other side of a river, and his prince is at enmity with mine, while I have no quarrel against him?

There are, undoubtedly, natural laws; but this specious, yet corrupt reason, has corrupted all: "*Nihil amplius nostrum est; quod nostrum dicimus, artis est; ex senatusconsultis et plebiscitis crimina exercentur; ut olim vitiis, sic nunc legibus laboramus.*"*

From this state of confusion it arises, that one maintains the essence of justice to lie in the authority of the legislator; another, in the will of the Sovereign; another, in present customs,—and this is the safest opinion: nothing founded on reason alone, is held to be just in itself; all yields, and bends, to time. Custom it is that constitutes the whole of equity, for this sole reason, that it is universal: that is the mystical foundation of her authority. Nothing is so faulty as those very laws which redress faults: he who obeys them, because they are just, obeys in them an imaginary justice, not the

* Montaigne, Book ii., chap. 12:—"*Il est croyable qu'il y a des lois naturelles, comme il se voit ès autres créatures: mais en nous elles sont perdues, cette belle raison humaine s'ingérant partout de maistriser et commander, brouillant et confondant le visage des choses, selon sa vanité et inconstance. 'Nihil itaque amplius nostrum est: quod nostrum dico artis est.'*"

very essence of law: this is wholly concentrated in itself; it is law, and nothing more. Whoever would seek to examine their secret springs and motives, would find them so feeble and capricious, that, if accustomed to explore the eccentricities of the human imagination, he would wonder that any one age should have acquired to itself so much dignity and reverence. The art of shaking and overthrowing states is to invalidate established customs, by probing them to their centre, and displaying their deficiency of justice.* We must, it is said, go back to the fundamental and primitive laws of the realm, which have been abolished by the injustice of custom: this is a sure procedure for destroying everything: tested by this standard, there will soon be no such thing as justice left. The common people, nevertheless, lend a ready ear to such discourses. Once made sensible of the burden, they proceed to rid themselves of it; and the ambitious build their own fortunes upon their ruin, and that of these nice investigators of established customs.† Yet, by a contrary defect, men sometimes fancy they may justly do everything which is shown not to be without precedent. For this reason, the wisest of legislators has said, that mankind must often be cajoled for their own good; and another able politician affirms,—"*Cum veritatem quâ liberetur ignoret, expedit quod fallatur.*"‡ Men must not be allowed to feel the reality

* At first, "deficiency of *authority* and justice."

† "*Examinateurs des coutumes reçues.*" At first, "*Examinateurs du fonds des coutumes reçues et des lois fondamentales d'autrefois.*"

‡ This quotation (which is apparently much mutilated at the hand of an amanuensis) is taken from the following passage in Montaigne, Book ii., chap. 12:—"*L'homme forge mille plaisantes sociétés entre Dieu et*

of usurpation: it obtained, heretofore, without right; it has acquired the character of right; it must now be regarded as authentic and immutable; the origin must be veiled, if we would not have it soon come to an end.*

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† V. "*Veri juris.*" We now possess it not: if we did, we should not make the rules of our jurisprudence conform to the manners of the country.

† It is that we make our laws not those of justice but of power.

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† VI. I have passed a large part of my life under the belief that justice exists; and therein I did not deceive myself; for there is a certain measure of it which God has been pleased to reveal. But this was not the view that I took of the matter; and there was my mistake;—for I believed that human justice was essentially just, and that I possessed the power to understand and to estimate it. (Erased.)

† But I have so often found myself at fault in my

lui. . . . Voici l'excuse que nous donnent sur la considération de ce sujet, Scevola grand pontife et Varron grand théologien en leur temps: Qu'il est besoin que le peuple ignore beaucoup de choses vraies et en croye beaucoup de fausses. 'Quum veritatem, quâ liberetur, inquirat, credatur ei expedire quod fallitur.' It is in Augustin (*De civitate Dei, Lib.* iv., c. 31) that will be found the following passage from Varro, to which Montaigne refers: '*Multa esse vera quæ non modo Vulgo scire non sit utile, sed etiam, tametsi falsa, aliter existimare Populum expediat.*'"—Terentius Varro, *De cultu Deorum.*

* The reader will be struck with the applicability of this passage (which might be almost deemed prophetic) to the existing dynasty of the great author's own country.

*** The above remark was written when the present work was commenced in 1847. Valueless as it is, it is retained; although many months have now elapsed since that illustrious dynasty referred to has been scattered, like the leaves in autumn, to the winds! (Transl.)

judgment, that at length I have learned to distrust myself and others also. I have seen all countries and all individuals in a state of change; and thus, after many fluctuations of opinion respecting true justice, I have discovered that man is but a creature of mutation. Since then, my opinions have remained unaltered; and if I were to change again, I should but be confirmed in my opinion. (Erased.)

—+ The Pyrrhonist Arcésilas, who changed to Dogmatist. (Erased.)

VII. + *Injustice.*

" + They have found no other way of satisfying their cupidity than by injuring others.

VIII. + *Injustice.*

It is dangerous to tell people that the laws are unjust; for obedience is secured only through a conviction of their justice. For this reason it ought to be laid down, at the same time, that they should be obeyed, because they *are* laws; in the same way as deference should be paid to our superiors, not because their conduct is governed by equity, but because they *are* our superiors. Let this be once understood, and all insubordination will be prevented: this is the only proper definition of justice.

IX. Montagne is wrong: custom should be followed, only because it is custom, not because it is reasonable or just. But the commonalty will conform to it, only because they believe it to be just; not as to mere custom;—

for they will only be in subjection to reason or justice. Without this, custom would be held to be tyranny; yet the sway of reason and justice is not more tyrannical than that of their own pleasure. + These are principles natural to man.

It would be well, then, that laws and custom should be obeyed, because they are law; that they* should believe that they are perfect truth and justice; that we know nothing of these things ourselves, and therefore ought to obey what authority and custom prescribe: by these means we shall never be drawn aside into error.

+ The common people, however, cannot receive these doctrines; and therefore, as they suppose that truth is really discoverable, and is inherent in laws and custom, they place confidence in them, and take their antiquity for a proof of their truth, and not merely of their authority independent of truth. Thus they obey: but their obedience ceases if they are brought to see any defectiveness in the laws; which may be demonstrated of everything in the world when only viewed under one aspect.

X. + The nature of man is nothing but nature: "*omne animal.*"†

+ There is nothing which may not be rendered natural; there is nothing natural which may not be lost.

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* Doubtless, "the people."

† In the copy is found the following line:—"*L'homme est proprement, 'omne animal.'*"

† The truth of nature being lost, everything may become natural.

† In the same way, the true happiness being lost, everything becomes man's true happiness.*

What are our natural principles, but those of custom? So, in children, they are those handed down from their parents,—such as the chase in animals.

A difference of habit will give rise to other natural principles. This is seen by experience; and if there are any, that are ineffaceable by habit, there are also some, contrary to nature, which are ineffaceable by nature and custom: this is the result of disposition.

Fathers are apprehensive lest the natural love of their children should be extinguished. What, then, is this natural impulse, thus subject to decay? Habit is a second nature, which destroys the first. Why is habit not natural? I am much afraid that this natural affection may be a kind of first habit, as habit is a second nature.

XI. Justice is that which is established; therefore all our established laws should be necessarily deemed just, without scrutiny, because they are established.

XII. † *Injustice.*

† Jurisprudence is not an institution for the benefit of

* In the copy.

those who judge, but of those who are judged.* It is dangerous to tell the people this. Yet the people have too much confidence in you: well, this will not injure them, and may serve you. You ought then to proclaim this: "*pasce oves meas, non tuas.*" You owe me pasture.

XIII. † *Justice.*

† As fashion decides comeliness, so it does justice.†

Why do we follow the multitude? Is it because they are most frequently in the right? No: but they have most power.

Why do we adhere to ancient laws and opinions? Are they the wisest and best? No: but they lead to uniformity, and cut away the roots of strife.

XIV. The sway of opinion and imagination endures for a time, and is mild and uncompulsory; that of force lasts perpetually. Thus, opinion is the lenient ruler of the world, but force is the tyrant.

XV. "*Summum jus, summa injuria.*" The way of the majority is the best, because it is the obvious one, and is capable of enforcing obedience; nevertheless it is usually the opinion of the least instructed.

Had it been practicable, force should have been always made subservient to justice; but, seeing that force can-

* Orig. "*La juridiction ne se donne pas pour (le) juridiciant, mais pour le juridicié.*"

† In another place Pascal says,—"In one age the fair, in another the brunette is the favourite. Fashion and country often regulate what is called beauty."—Miscellaneous Writings, (*Passions de l'amour,*) p. 133.

not be directed as we would wish, being a material quality, while, on the other hand, justice is a spiritual one, which can be wielded at pleasure, justice has come to be subordinated to force; and thus we call that *just* which we are compelled to observe.

— † Thence comes the right of the sword; for the sword gives a real right.

† But for this, we should see violence on one side, and justice on the other. (Conclusion of the 12th Provincial.)

† Thence arises the injustice of the Fronde, which arrays pretended justice against power.

— † It is not so in the church; for in her there is real justice, and no violence.

XVI. † "When the strong man armed keeps the city, it is in peace."

XVII. † *Justice. Force.*

It is right that what is just should be obeyed. It is necessary that the will of the strongest should be obeyed.

Justice, without power, is impotent; power, without justice, is tyranny.

Justice, without power, is questioned, because there will always be anarchists; power, without justice, will be challenged. It is necessary, therefore, that justice and power should be united; and, by that means, what is just becomes strong, and what is strong just.

Justice is obnoxious to cavil; power is beyond question or dispute. Therefore power could not be always entrusted to justice, because power contradicts justice, and maintains that in itself alone is true justice; and

thus, as justice could not always be powerful, it has been contrived that power should be just.

XVIII. The only universal rules are the laws of the country in ordinary matters, and the voice of the majority in other things. Whence is this? From the power residing in them.

Thence it is, that Kings, who have other sources of strength, do not follow the opinions of their ministers.

Equality of benefits is doubtless just: but, as it is not possible that force should obey justice, it has come to pass that justice has become obedient to force: as justice could not be invested with power, power has been rendered just: and thus justice and force form a coalition; and peace, the supreme good, is preserved between them.

[+] Wisdom refers us to the state of infancy: "*nisi efficiamini sicut parvuli.*"

XIX. [+] *Good sense.*

[+] People under constraint say, You do not act sincerely; we ought not, &c. How I love to see this pride of reason humiliated and brought down! Why, this is not the language of one whose rights are contested, and who defends them by force and arms. He does not trifle by talking about violations of good faith; he punishes bad faith by force.

XX. [+] As magistracies, and duchies, and royalties are real and necessary, (insomuch as force regulates all

things,) these are found everywhere, and at all times. Yet, as they are only the creatures of fancy, there is no stability in them, but they are constantly liable to vicissitude, &c.*

XXI. † The Ecclesiastes shows us that man without God is in ignorance of all things, and hopelessly unhappy. Unhappiness consists in the possession of desires, without the power to fulfil them. Now man wishes for happiness and truth; yet can he neither know wherein they consist, nor be without the desire for such knowledge. He is not able even to doubt.

XXII. † We can walk safely in the light of these heavenly luminaries, and after having . . . . . (Erased.)

Without this divine knowledge, what has man been able to achieve, except either to plume himself upon the consciousness of his original greatness, or to be humbled in the contemplation of his present degradation?† Absolute truth being unknown to men, they have been unable to attain to perfect virtue. One class regarding nature as uncorrupted, another as incurable, they have been alternately the victims of pride or sensuality, the sources of all vice; and into which the

* The imperfect way in which this passage is jotted down in the MS., shows that it was intended to be no more than a mere rough note.

† Here we find the following passage erased:—"In this powerlessness to ascertain perfect truth, if they perceive the dignity of our condition, they are ignorant of its corruption; or if they know its weakness, they are unacquainted with its excellencies: and, according as they follow the one or the other of these views, which exhibit human nature as either unfallen or incurable, they bolster themselves up in pride, or plunge into despair."

latter inevitably tends to plunge them, while the former is powerless for their extrication. If, on the one hand, they possessed some knowledge of man's excellencies, they were ignorant of his corruption; they might be raised above voluptuousness, but it was only to fall into vain-glory.* On the other hand, if they acknowledged the infirmity of human nature, they had no consciousness of its dignity; and while they escaped the seductions of vanity, they plunged into despair.

Hence arose the various sects of Stoics and Epicureans, of Dogmatists and Academicians, &c. The Christian religion *alone* discovered the remedy for those evils; not in setting the one against the other by the wisdom of this world, but in overthrowing them all through the simplicity of the *Gospel*. It is this which, while elevating the just to a participation of the Divine nature itself, reveals to them that, in this exalted state, they bear yet within them the seeds of that corruption, which, throughout the whole of their earthly existence, renders them the subjects of error, misery, sin, and death; and this also proclaims to the most debased of the human race, that it is yet in their power to become partakers of their Redeemer's grace. Inspiring the holy with salutary fears, and extending its hopes to the most sinful, the Gospel so mildly tempers fears with encouragement, and holds the scales so evenly between grace and sin, that the soul is far more effectually abased—yet without abandoning herself to despair—than she could have been by any efforts of mere human reason; while she is infi-

* Orig. "*superbe.*" This, in the St. Germain copy, is displaced, in Arnauld's handwriting, by the word "*orgueil.*"

nitely more elevated, although without unwholesome inflation, than she could have been by the pride of nature:—plainly showing that, unalloyed by error and corruption, these sacred principles alone can correct and purify the evils of the fallen nature of man.

Who then can withhold his belief in this celestial revelation, and his adoration of its ineffable mysteries? Can we not perceive in ourselves, as traced by the bright beams of the noon-day sun, the ineffaceable characters of our pristine excellence? And do we not equally feel, with bitter force, the effects of our fall and ruin? What is it, then, that from amidst this fearful confusion and chaos, we hear proclaimed to us with a voice of irresistible conviction, but the irrefragable truth of these two co-existent states of humanity? *

*. The partiality of an Editor may, perhaps, be forgiven, for pausing for a moment to remark the exquisite beauty and force of these concluding paragraphs. (Transl.)

CHAPTER II.

CHARACTERISTICS

OF

TRUE RELIGION.

EDITORIAL NOTICE.

We consider that we are making as near an approach as possible to Pascal's plan,—which, however, especially in its details, is difficult to trace,—in collecting here, under a distinct chapter, the various fragments in which the author unfolds what he deems to be the Characteristics of a true religion.

Pascal made his profound knowledge of man, by means of which he had so thoroughly analysed the system of philosophy, equally subservient to his investigation of revealed religion. He had demonstrated that the schemes of the philosophers were unsatisfactory and fallacious, possessing nothing with which to fill the wants of man's spirit, or answer the just demands of human reason. He now proceeds to show, on the one hand, that a true religion ought to be in perfect agreement with our nature; should be able perfectly to search into and explain its mysteries; and, further, ought to teach man, not only the knowledge, but the love of the Deity;—and, on the other, that the Christian religion is the only system which fulfils this two-fold vocation: that is to say, that it accomplishes everything to which the philosophical systems, and all other schemes of religion, have proved themselves to be incompetent. (*French Editor.*)

CHARACTERISTICS

OF

TRUE RELIGION.

I. The true nature of man, his real happiness, true virtue, and religion, are things the knowledge of which is inseparable.

II. † True religion teaches our duties; it reveals our impotence, pride, and sensuality; and enforces the remedies,—humility and mortification.

III. Any one understanding the real nature of man, must perceive that a true religion ought to be versed in our nature; ought to know its greatness and its degradation; and the causes of both the one and the other.

What religion but Christianity exhibits such a knowledge as this?

No other than this has shown man to be the most excellent creature in existence. Some persons who have discovered the greatness of his excellencies, have mistaken for a sordid and unthankful spirit the unworthy sentiments which men entertain of themselves; and others, who well knew how real his degradation is, have treated with ridicule and disdain those exalted aspirations which are likewise natural to man.

"Raise your view to your Maker," said the one; "contemplate him in whose likeness you are formed, and who has created you for his worship: you have the power to acquire a resemblance to him; wisdom will place you, if its dictates be followed, on a level with his greatness."* Others said, "Cast your eyes down to the earth, vile worm of the dust, and contemplate only the beasts, your fellows!"

What then is man to do? Is he to aspire to an equality with God, or descend to the level of the brute? O fearful disparity! What, what is he to do? † Who does not perceive from this, that man is fallen,—has lost his original station; that he seeks impatiently to regain it,—but seeks in vain? And who is to be his guide, when the great and the wise have deceived him, and failed? †

IV. † A true religion, then, ought to instruct man both in his greatness and his misery; should apply itself to his esteem and to his contempt of himself, to his love and his hatred.‡

V. No other religion ever taught man to hate himself. No other, then, can please those who hate themselves, and seek in another being a proper object for their love. And such as these, had they never before heard of the religion of a God who "humbled himself," would at once and with eagerness embrace it.

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* In the margin of the MS. stands, "*Haussez la tête, hommes libres, dit Épictète.*"

† St. Germain copy.

‡ Idem.

VI. Whoever does not abhor his own self-love, and his propensity to make self his idol, is blind and ignorant. Nothing can be so opposed to justice and truth as these dispositions. It is untrue that we are deserving of any such exorbitant self-homage; it is unjust, for all desire the same thing. It is a manifest obliquity of disposition which we received at our birth: we are unable ourselves to subdue it, and yet it must be subdued.

No other religious system has ever discovered that such propensities are sinful, that they are the taint of our birth, and that we ought to resist them; no other has attempted to furnish us with remedies against them.

VII. If there be a God, we ought to love him only, and not the ephemeral beings of his creation. The reasoning of the sensual in the Book of Wisdom, is founded only on the belief that there is no God. Assuming this, "Let us," say they, "enjoy ourselves in created good: it is our only resource." But had they believed there was a God to be loved, their conclusion would have been different. It is the admonition of the wise,— "There is a God: let us, then, not seek enjoyment in the creatures."

— Everything, therefore, that inclines us to attach ourselves to creatures, is evil; because the doing so prevents us from either serving God, if we know him, or seeking him if we know him not. Now we are full of sensuality, and of every moral evil; therefore we ought to abhor ourselves, and everything which tends to excite us to any other attachments than to God alone.

VIII. If there be any one great principle, any final aim, it is God, and God only. A true religion, then, ought to be one that adores and loves no other being than Him. Yet, seeing we are incapable of worshipping a Being with whom we are not acquainted, and of loving any one but ourselves, a religion which instructs us in our duties should also inform us of our inability to perform them, and provide us with a remedy for such inability. † Our religion does in fact reveal to us that, by man, we have lost everything; that the union between God and ourselves has been broken; and that by man also this union has been renewed.

† We are, by the original evil of our nature, so opposed to this love of our Maker, and it is yet so indispensable to us, that it is evident we are guilty from our birth, or God would be unjust.

A mark of true religion, and one founded in the highest principle of justice, is, that love to God should be necessary to us. Ours, and no other than ours, has enjoined this. It should lay down, also, as a principle, man's sensuality and weakness: this also is done by Christianity.

It should further prescribe the remedies for these evils, one of which is prayer. By no other religion is man taught to ask of God that he may love and obey him.

IX. There is no doctrine so adapted to man as that which instructs him in his capability both of receiving and lapsing from grace, through the two-fold danger to which he is ever exposed,—of despair, and of pride.

X. Christianity is a system of wonders. It enjoins upon man to acknowledge himself vile,—yea, abominable; yet commands him to aspire to a likeness to God! Without such a counterpoise, his elevation would render him fearfully vain, or his abasement hopelessly abject.

His abasement is not of such a nature as to render man incapable of good; nor yet does his sanctity exempt him from evil.

XI. Misery urges to despair.

Pride incites to presumption.

The Incarnation shows man the greatness of his misery in the greatness of the remedy that it demanded.

XII. † Holy Scripture has provided passages for consolation in all conditions, and for warning under all circumstances.

† Nature seems to have done the same by means of her two infinitudes,—natural and moral: for we always find degrees, from the lowest to the highest, of inferior or eminent ability,—of elevation or degradation,—for the purpose both of abasing our pride, and encouraging us under our despondency.

XIII. † *Contrarieties.*

† Infinite wisdom, and wisdom of religion.*

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† *Source of Contrarieties.*

A God "humbling himself" even to the death of the cross.—A Messiah triumphing over death by his own death.

* In the copy only.

Two natures in Jesus Christ.—Two Advents. Two conditions in man's nature.

All these contrarieties, which seemed the most to repel me from the knowledge of religion, are the very things that most effectually led me to that religion which alone is the true one.

XIV. + *God hiding himself.*

—+ If there had been but one religious system, God would have been manifested therein.

+ It would have been the same had there been martyrs only in the cause of *our* religion.

— God having thus concealed himself, any religion which does not exhibit the Deity in this character of concealment, is not a true one; and that which does not unfold the reason for such a mystery, is not an instructive one. Ours does both the one and the other: "*vere tu es Deus absconditus.*"

XV. The unbeliever, who professes to follow only his reason, ought to have a very powerful reason.

What, then, does he say?

"Do we not see," he says, "the brutes exist and die like human beings, and Turks like Christians? They (Infidels) have their ceremonies, their prophets, their teachers, their saints, their devotees, like ourselves." How, then, is this contrary to Scripture? Does not Scripture itself affirm all this?

If you have no anxiety to ascertain truth, this may be indeed sufficient to leave you in peace. But, if you

do heartily desire to ascertain it, then it is not sufficient: look at the matter closely. All this might avail upon a mere question of philosophy; but here, where everything is at stake . . . .

And yet, after these shallow reflections, they will go on trifling, &c. . . . .

Let them set themselves to enquire whether revelation does not assign the reasons of this obscurity upon which they comment: then, perhaps, they will learn the fact.*

[+] *A P. R.* † *Pour demain.*

[+] Prosopopée.

In vain, O mortals, do you seek in yourselves the remedy of your miseries! All your intelligence can serve only to prove, that in you is found neither truth nor happiness. Philosophy promised you both, but has deceived you. Its professors know neither wherein consists your real good, nor what is your actual condition. How should they have furnished remedies for the evils which afflict you, when they understand nothing of them? ‡ Your principal disorders are

* In this, and the paragraphs immediately preceding, we are tantalized by their abrupt and fragmentary character; a most pregnant topic being opened up, but a mere rudiment only of the discussion executed. (Transl.)

† See note, page 152.

‡ Here the following lines are erased (apparently meant to be an appeal of Divine Wisdom to man):—"I alone can instruct you in these things. I teach them to those who are willing to learn. The volume which I have given to man reveals them. But I intended not that this knowledge should be too easily acquired. I teach men the way of happiness. Why will ye not listen? . . . Seek not satisfaction on earth. Hope nothing from man. Your true happiness is alone in God; in knowing him, and in being united to him to all eternity. Your duty is to love him with your whole heart. He created you . . . "

pride, which alienates you from God; and sensuality, which attaches you to earth: and they have been perpetually engaged in fostering either the one or the other of these evils. If they have presented to you God, as your first object, it has been only to excite your pride. They have led you to suppose you resemble your Maker, and that your degraded nature bears a conformity to his. And those who discerned the folly of these pretensions proceeded to impel you into a contrary extreme,—made you believe your nature to be like that of the brute, and urged you to seek your chief good in sordid lusts, which are shared with the lowest animal natures.

These are not the means to cure the disorders of your nature, of which these boasted sages understood nothing. + All I can do is to make you perceive that you are both . . . .

—+ I ask not of you a blind credulity. (Erased.)

—+ Adam. J. C.

—+ If they would make you one with God, it should be by grace, not by nature.

—+ If they would humble you, it should be in penitence, not in nature.

—+ Thus, this double capacity . . .

—+ You are not in the state in which you were by creation.

— This twofold state being so palpable, it is impossible that you should not acknowledge it.

Observe your internal emotions; study yourselves, and

* Pascal here seems to have broken off the further development of his reasoning, to throw out the half-finished notes which follow. The chain of argument seems, however, to be resumed in the noble passage at p. 153, beginning, "What is that religion, then, ..." (Transl.)

see whether you do not perceive the living characters of these two natures.

— Would such manifold contradictions be found in a being of an uncompounded nature?

—† *Incomprehensible.**

† A thing may be incomprehensible, and yet be true:† an infinite number, for instance; an infinite space equal to final.

— *Incredible that God should unite himself to us.*‡— This objection originates only in our own view of man's degradation. But if you entertain it sincerely, follow out the consideration with me, and you will acknowledge our degradation to be such that we are, of ourselves, unable to know whether the divine love can make us capable of such union, or not. For, let me ask, how is it that man, the feeble being which he confesses himself to be, can have a right to measure the compassion of Deity, and set to it such bounds as his mere fancy shall suggest? So little does he know what God is, that he knows not what he is himself; and, full of perplexity in the contemplation of his own condition, he presumes to assert that the Omnipotent cannot render him capable of his august communications! Now, I would desire to know, what more does God demand of man, than, after having acquired a knowledge of him, to love him; and why should he then suppose that God cannot render him capable of

* "*Incomprehensible*" here evidently denotes an objection.

† "*Tout ce qui est incompréhensible ne laisse pas* d'être." This proposition is only found in the MS. Autograph.

‡ The same remark applies to this expression "*Incroyable*" as to the word "*Incompréhensible,*" in the preceding paragraph.

such knowledge and such love, since he is by nature endowed with a capacity both of love and knowledge? He knows this, at least, that he exists, and that he feels affection towards certain objects. If, then, amidst the darkness in which he is enveloped, he attains to some measure of knowledge; and if, among the earthly objects which surround him, there are some which excite his love; why, if the Deity imparts to him some portion of his illumination, should he not be capable of knowing and loving Him, in that way in which it shall please him to reveal himself to us? There is, therefore, in such reasonings as these an intolerable presumption, although it wears the semblance of humility;—a humility, neither sincere nor rational, if it leads us not to acknowledge that, knowing nothing of ourselves, of our own nature, we can acquire no knowledge of it but from God.

—Understand me not to intend that you should, unreasoning, submit your belief to mine: far be such tyrannical presumption from me. Neither do I pretend to make all things level to your apprehension. But, in order to reconcile these contradictions, I propose to show you, by convincing proofs, those marks of a divine origin in me,* which may show you who I am, and establish the authority of my assertions by evidences which you will not be able to resist. Thus shall you admit my instructions with confidence, when you find no other ground of objection than that you cannot comprehend them by your unassisted understanding.

God has been desirous to restore man from his lost

* This, like a former passage, seems to be a kind of personification of Wisdom, or the Divine Word, apostrophizing man. (Transl.)

estate, and open a way of salvation for those who wish to find it. But men have rendered themselves so unworthy of this boon, that it is just in God to refuse to certain among them, on account of their obduracy, that which, in the exercise of a compassion to which they can have laid no claim, he has granted to others. Had he seen fit to overcome the obdurate, he could have done it by a revelation of his Divine power so manifest as to admit no doubt of its truth;—in the same way as he will appear, at the last day, when the thunders shall sound, the earth shall pass away, the dead shall arise, and the unbeliever shall at length be convinced!

It is not in this way, however, that Jehovah has thought proper to reveal himself in this, his more benignant dispensation. Many having rejected his offered clemency, he has determined to leave them in the privation of blessings which they were unwilling to accept.* It was not consistent with his justice to manifest himself to them with evidences so clear as not to be resisted; but neither was it just to descend to men in a way so obscure, as that he should not be recognized by all who seek him in sincerity. To such as these, his intention was to be easily discoverable; and thus, willing to be found of all who seek him sincerely, and yet concealing himself from those who harden their hearts against him, he has so modified † the revelation of himself, that the proofs of his presence may be manifest to all who seek him, but are hidden to such as seek him not.

* "*Qu'ils ne veulent pas,*" at first, "*qu'ils ne veulent pas* rechercher."

† The close of this paragraph, after "modified," *(tempère)* is found in a small paper, numbered p. 57, in the front of which stands "*à P. R. pour demain.* 2."

Thus is there light sufficient for such as desire to see, and obscurity for all who "love darkness better than light."

XVII. † *A P. R.* * *Commencement, after having explained "the incomprehensibility."*

The greatness and the misery of man are so evident, that a true revelation becomes necessary, to instruct us that there is some leading principle of greatness in man, as well as some leading source of his misery.

It is requisite, also, that such a revelation should furnish us with the reasons of contrarieties so astonishing.

In order that man should be happy, he should be instructed that there is a God; that love to Him is man's duty; that our true felicity consists in union with —our only real calamity in separation from—Him: we should be made to feel that we are surrounded with darkness, which prevents us from knowing and loving God; and thus, that while our duty impels us to such love, and our sensual propensities draw us aside from it, we are beings of mere disorder and contradiction. Revelation ought to supply us with the solution of these opposing impulses, which urge us alternately to obey God, and to indulge our own wills; it should teach us

* *A P. R.* means, doubtless, "*A Port Royal.*" This mark, which is attached to several other fragments, leads to the supposition that the Recluses were accustomed to hold certain conferences, in which each prepared discourses upon given subjects of religion or moral philosophy, and that Pascal had composed these pages in pursuance of such conferences. Might they not have been parts of that discourse which he once delivered to his friends,—the plan of his projected great work? Stephen Perier and Dubois de Lacour, who preserved the analysis of that discourse, inform us, that he spoke on the occasion for three hours continuously, and with incomparable eloquence.

what are the remedies for our own weakness, and show us the way to obtain them. Examine, then, with this view, all the religious systems in the world, and say, if there be any other than the Christian which fulfils this high vocation.

Is it that of the philosophers, which proposes to us the good that is in *ourselves*, as our only good? Is this, indeed, the true good? Has man, then, found the remedy for the ills of man? Is the cure for his presumption to be found in exalting him to an equality with his God? And those, again, who would bring him down to a level with the brutes,—and the Mohammedans, who assign to him, even through the ages of eternity, the sordid pleasures of earth,—have they furnished the true remedy for man's sensuality?

What is that religion, then, which shall teach us the cure both of our pride and of our sensuality? What, in short, shall show us our real good?—what instruct us in our duties, prove to us the cause of our failures, discover the remedies,* and help us to obtain them? Every other has failed. Mark we then what the Wisdom of God has achieved.

Expect not, she proclaims, either truth or consolation from man. It is I who formed you; and I alone can instruct you what and whence you are. You are not now in the state in which you were first created. I made man holy, innocent, perfect; filled him with light and intelligence; communicated to him of the glories of my nature, and the wonders of my works. His eye then gazed on the unveiled majesty of God. The shades and

* In the MS. "*ce remède.*"

darkness in which he is now enveloped had not gathered round him: suffering was unknown, and the solemn decree of mortality had not gone forth. But the excess of his glory hurled him into presumption. He aimed to be the centre to himself, and to be independent of ME. He revolted from my sway, and sought to rival me in becoming the source of his own felicity. Then I abandoned him to himself; and, rousing all the creatures, heretofore submitted to his authority, into revolt against him, from his willing subjects they became his enemies. Thus has man now become like the very brutes themselves: his intelligence is clouded and extinct: an alien from my favour, he scarcely retains a glimmering perception of his Author. His senses, loosed from the control of reason, and often become her rulers, transport him into a pursuit of pleasures. All created good is to him a source of suffering or temptation; and either subdues him, resistless, to its sway, or, with a yet more deadly and imperious rule, fascinates him by its illusions!

This then is the present condition of man. He retains some feeble and imperfect instincts of his primitive glory and happiness; but he is imperviously wrapped in the misery and darkness of sensuality, which has become to him a second nature.

From the principles which I have thus opened to you, may be perceived the cause of all the contrarieties by which men have ever been perplexed, and which have given rise to such an endless diversity of sentiments. Mark but those impulses of greatness and glory, which the experience of all their suffering and misery has not

been able to extinguish; and then say if the cause be not in a changed and corrupted nature?

XVIII. It is true, then, that everything tends to instruct man in his true condition; and this ought indeed to be well understood, for it is not true that everything either discovers or conceals God. But it is true that he alike conceals himself from those who shun him, and discovers himself to those who seek him; inasmuch as men are at the same time unworthy of God, and fitting recipients of his sacred presence,—unworthy through their present corruption, fitting in virtue of their original innocence.*

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† What then are we to conclude from all our darkness, but our unworthiness? †

XIX. † *Objections of Atheists:*—But we have no light.

XX. If there were no obscurity, man would not perceive his corruption; if he had no light, he would not hope for a remedy. Therefore it is not only right, but useful for us, that God should be partly concealed, and partly discovered to his creatures;—since it is equally dangerous to man, to know his Maker without a perception of his own misery, and to perceive his misery without a knowledge of God.‡

If there had never been any manifestation of God

* In the copy only. † Idem. ‡ Idem.

to man, that entire privation would have been of equivocal import, and might have been indifferently resolved into the total absence of Deity, or to man's unworthiness of his revelations. But by the fact that his appearances are occasional and not constant, the difficulty is solved. If he had only, in a single instance, revealed himself, his perpetual existence would have been palpable; and no other conclusion can be come to, than that there is a God, and that men are unworthy of his presence.*

XXI. If it be objected that man is too insignificant to enjoy communication with God, I answer, he must possess great capacity to be a judge of the fact. (Erased.)

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† Man is not worthy of God; but he is not incapable of becoming worthy.

It is unworthy of God to unite himself to man in his state of degradation; but it is not unworthy of God to deliver him from that degradation.

XXII. If the compassion of God is so great that he instructs us even when he conceals himself, what measure of illumination may we not expect when he reveals himself to man? †

XXIII. † Confess then the truth of religion, even in its very obscurity,—in the small degree of our illumination,—in our indifference to be better instructed.‡

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* In the copy only. † Idem. ‡ Idem.

XXIV. † The Eternal must ever *be*, if once proved *to be.**

XXV. † The various classes of cavillers injure only each other,—not religion. All that the infidel says . . . . . †

XXVI. † Thus does all creation teach man either that he is fallen, or that he is restored: everything proclaims his greatness, or his misery. God's abandonment of man appears in the heathen; his favour, in the Jews.‡

XXVII. There is nothing in the whole earth that does not prove either the misery of man, or the compassion of God; either his powerlessness without—or his power with—God.§

— God has made the blindness of this people subserve the good of the elect.

XXVIII. The world subsists for the exercise of Divine compassion, and of judgment; not as if men were in the state in which they came from the hand of their Creator, but, as they actually are,—the enemies of God, to whom, in the exercise of his grace, he imparts light *sufficient for their return to him*, if disposed to do;

* In the copy only. † Idem. ‡ Idem.

§ This may be regarded as in some measure an epitome of Pascal's entire Essay, and comprises the two great divisions, which are elsewhere more completely developed. (French Editor.)

and to justify his punishments, if they refuse to seek and obey him.*

XXIX. God desires to influence rather the will than the understanding. Perfect knowledge would benefit the mind, but impair the affections.

+ To humble pride.†

XXX. + The corruption of reason appears in different and extravagant ways. It is necessary that Truth herself should be revealed, in order that man should no longer live to himself.‡

XXXI. Who can do otherwise than admire and embrace a religion which so thoroughly displays all the requisites that are most appreciated in proportion to our growing intelligence? §

XXXII. For my part, I confess, that as soon as I found the Christian religion laying down this principle, —that the nature of man is corrupt, and fallen away from his Maker,—my eyes were opened to the truth of the entire system. Nature everywhere bears the marks of a God lost and forsaken, both as regards man, and everything else besides man.

* In the copy only.

† "*Superbe.*" In the St. Germain copy, the word "*superbe*" is erased by Arnauld, and replaced by "*orgueil.*"

‡ In the copy only.

§ Neither in the MS. nor copy.

XXXIII. There are two great and abiding articles of faith:—the one, that man, whether in his state of nature or of grace, is elevated above everything in nature, endowed with likeness to God, and made a partaker of Divinity; the other, that, in his state of corruption and sin, he is fallen from his first condition, and is reduced to a likeness of the brute. These two propositions are clear and certain. Scripture declares the truth plainly, where it states,—"*Deliciæ meæ, esse cum filiis hominum.*"* "*Effundam spiritum meum super omnem carnem.*"† "*Dii estis,*" *&c.*‡ And again elsewhere:—"*Omnis caro fœnum.*"§ "*Homo comparatus est jumentis insipientibus, et similis factus est illis.*"‖ "*Dixi in corde meo de filiis hominum, ut probaret eos Deus et ostenderet similes esse bestiis,*"¶ *&c.*

XXXIV. Every religion is false, which has not for its leading tenet, to adore one God as the first principle of all things; and its moral system, to love one God only, and supremely in all things.

* Prov. viii. 21. † Joel ii. 28. ‡ Psalm lxxxii. 6.
§ Is. xl. 6. ‖ Psalm xlix. 20. ¶ Ecc. iii. 18.

CHAPTER III.

MEANS OF ATTAINING TO FAITH:

REASON, HABIT, INSPIRATION.

EDITORIAL NOTICE.

THERE is nothing in Pascal's notes which indicates the proper place to be assigned to this Chapter. But it may be surmised that, after designating the characteristics of the Christian religion, and exciting the desire to enter upon the benefits which that system confers, the writer might properly investigate, and point out the methods of attaining to, that Faith. This is, evidently, the leading object of these fragments, which are here collected, and formed into a separate chapter, particularly those entitled "Infinitude, Nullity."

This latter fragment, in which Pascal, after applying the calculation of probabilities to the question of God and the soul, and applying himself to demonstrate mathematically that the chances should be taken for the existence of God, and the immortality of the soul, proceeds to appeal to the deepest sentiments of the heart: this fragment, so justly celebrated, is now *for the first time* published in perfect conformity with the original MS.

It is entirely in Pascal's own hand, and written in his most abbreviated manner. We deem it important to remark, even at the risk of appearing too minute, that the MS. of this fragment bears the appearance of the rudest sketch: it is nothing more than a series of imperfect notes, thrown out as mere rudiments of thought, and wholly destitute of arrangement. Of this, some idea may be formed, from the figures and marks of reference inserted in the margin;* but better still by the inspection of the MS. itself. One of the sheets has evidently been folded up four-square, and bears marks of being long carried in the pocket.

On one of the notes is the following title:—"Conclusion of this discourse;" which induces the conjecture, that they had been written by Pascal preparatory to a conversation with some of his worldly-minded acquaintances; such, for instance, as the Chevalier de Méré. However this may be, it is certain that the fragment "*Infini, Rien*," can only be considered as a kind of canvass, on which the writer had drawn the outline of his subject, for the purpose of further elucidation and development. (*French Editor.*)

* Of the French Edition.

MEANS OF ATTAINING TO FAITH:

REASON, HABIT, INSPIRATION.

I.

† *Infinitude. Nullity.*

† Our soul is placed in a body, in which it meets with number, time, space. It reasons thereupon, calls these things nature and necessity, and can* form no other idea of them.

— Units joined to infinity cannot increase it, any more than a single foot in length can add to an infinite measure. The finite is annihilated in the presence of the infinite, and becomes pure nullity. Such is the soul of man in the presence of God; such our righteousness by the side of the Divine.

There is not so great a disproportion between our righteousness and that of God, as between the unit and infinity. †

— The justice of God must be immense, as well as his compassion; yet is the justice of God towards the condemned less immense, and less overwhelming to the thought, than his grace towards the elect.

* "*Ne peut,*" at first, "*ne veut croire.*"

† It is possible that Pascal here intended the reverse of the expression he has used; namely, that the disproportion is not so great between unit and infinity, as between our righteousness and that of God; and the old editions have adopted this change. It is not, however, for *us* to alter the original language.

— We know there is an infinite, and yet understand not its nature; as we also know it to be not true that numbers are finite: it is certain, then, there is an infinite in numbers, but we do not know in what it consists. It is not true that it consists in equal numbers; it is not true that it consists in inequality: for, by adding a unit to them, their nature is not changed; they are still numbers, and all numbers are either equal or unequal; this also is the case with all finite numbers.*

— Therefore we may easily be certain there is a God, without knowing what he is.

+ We know, then, the existence and the nature of the finite, because we are, like it, finite, and diffusive *(étendus)*.

+ We know the existence of the infinite, and are ignorant of its nature; because it has diffusion or extension, *(étendue,)* but not limitation, like ourselves. †

+ But of God we know not either the existence or the nature, because he has neither extension nor limit.

— + By faith, however, we know his existence; in glory we shall learn his nature. Now, I have already shown that we may fully know the existence of an object without knowing its nature.

— We will now reason upon natural considerations. If there be a God, he is infinitely incomprehensible; because, being without parts or limitation, he bears no relation to ourselves: we are therefore incapable of

* In the margin of the preceding paragraph is the following:—"Is there not any substantial truth, seeing there are so many things that are *true*, and yet not *truth* itself?"

† This stood at first, "Because we have a relation to him by the extension, and disproportion by the limitation."

knowing either what he is, or whether he exists. Who, then, shall dare to resolve this great question? Not beings like ourselves, who have nothing in common, or in relation with him!

Shall any one, then, take upon himself to blame the Christian for not being able to assign grounds of his faith?—he who professes his religion as one not amenable to human reason. Christians, in announcing their scheme to the world, proclaim it to be "foolishness," *stultitiam*, and yet you reproach them for not proving it! Did they affect to prove it, they would contradict themselves: the absence of proofs implies no deficiency in its reasonableness.

True: but, although this may excuse such as propound the creed, and may exempt from blame the producing it without reasons, it does not satisfy those who have to receive it.

Let us examine this matter, and put it thus: Either there is a God, or there is not. Which side of the question shall we take? Reason cannot decide. A gulf, unbounded as chaos, separates us. At the extremity of this immeasurable space, a game of chance is playing,—call it "Head or tail."* Which way will you wager? By mere reason you cannot affirm—by mere reason you cannot deny—either the one or the other of these two propositions. Charge not, then, with error those who

* "*Il se joue un jeu à l'extrêmité de cette distance infinie où il arrivera* croix ou pile." It is to be regretted that our language does not furnish any better than the *chuck-farthing* rendering for this expression which is given above. The phrase in the original by no means presents the same incongruity with its sublime antecedents, the "*chaos infinie*," and the "*extrémité de cette distance infinie*," at which the "*croix ou pile*" is placed. (Transl.)

have made their choice; for you know nothing of the matter in question.

True: but I blame them for having made not *this* choice, but *a* choice; for if he who wins the wager, and he who loses it, be equally at fault, why then it only follows that they are both at fault: the right course is not to wager at all.

Good: but we *must* wager; it is no question of the will: we are committed to one side or the other. Which will you take, then? Since you must make a choice, notice on which side your interest the least ponderates. You have two things to lose,—truth, and well-being; and two things to wager,—your reason, and your will,—your knowledge, and your happiness. Your nature, also, has two things to avoid,—error, and misery. Reason cannot be offended, since a choice must be made, in making your election for the one any more than for the other. This is one point gained. But then, as regards your happiness? Let us weigh the gain and the loss, in wagering for the existence of a God. Look at the alternatives. If you win, you win everything; if you lose, you lose nothing. Wager, then, without hesitation, that He exists!

Admirable! It is true I must wager; but I risk, perhaps, too much.

Let us consider. Since there is an equal risk of gain and loss, had you only to win two lives for one, you might still wager. But, if there were three lives to win, you *ought* to play, since you must take a side; and it would be short-sighted, being thus obliged to play, not to risk your own life to gain three, in a game in which there is an equal risk of losing and winning. But in

reality there is here an eternity of life and glory to win.

[+] And that being the case, if the chances were infinite, and one only on your side, you would still do right to wager one for the chance of gaining two; and you would be very irrational, being compelled to play, to refuse to wager one life against three,—in a game in which, out of an infinitude of chances, there was one on your side, —seeing there might be gained an eternity of life, an infinitude of happiness.

[+] Now, here there is an eternity of life,—of infinite blessedness, to be gained; one chance of gain against a finite number of chances of loss;* and what you stake is finite. [+] This one thing is clear in every case where infinitude is concerned; and where there is not an infinite number of chances of loss against the one of gain, there can be no hesitation: all must be risked. [+] And thus, being compelled to wager, it is a violation of reason, to preserve life, rather than risk it, for that infinite gain which is as likely to ensue as the contrary loss of annihilation.

It avails nothing to allege that there is an uncertainty of gain, and a certainty of risk; and that the infinite distance which there is between the certainty of that we expose to hazard, and the uncertainty of what we may gain, equalizes the finite good, which we certainly expose, with the infinite, which is uncertain. That is not the right position: every gamester hazards a certainty to gain an uncertainty; notwithstanding which, he hazards with confidence the finite, for the uncertain chance of gaining

* At first, "and equal chance of gain and loss." The two copies have also, "infinite number of chances," which is wrong; it is "*finite*" in the MS.

the infinite, without any violation of reason. It is wholly a mistake to maintain that there is an infinite distance between that certainty which is exposed to loss, and the uncertainty of gain. There is, indeed, infinitude between the certainty of gaining, and the certainty of loss. But the uncertainty of gain is proportioned to the certainty of that which is risked, according to the proportion of the chances of gain and loss; and thence, if there are as many chances on the one side as on the other, the game is equal: and so far from being infinitely distant, the certainty of what is exposed is equal to the uncertainty of gain.

Thus, our proposition is established with irrefragable force,—that the finite is to be risked in a wager, in which there is an equal chance of gain and loss—and infinitude to gain. Here is demonstration; and if men are capable of receiving truths at all, this is one.

I admit it. I am convinced. But yet, is there no way of getting below the surface, and unravelling the mystery of the game?

There is Scripture, and other things . . . . .

Yes: but my hands are tied; my mouth is closed; I am forced into this wager, and left no liberty of choice. I can find no escape; and am so constituted, that I cannot believe. What am I to do?

True. But learn, at least, your own inability to believe,* while you find reason uniting you to it, and you yet remain powerless. Labour not to attain to conviction by augmenting the proofs of a God, but by weakening the force of your passions. You desire to

* This was at first, "that your inability to believe arises only from your evil passions."

arrive at a true faith, and yet cannot find the way: you wish for the cure of your unbelief, and are diligent in seeking remedies. Put yourself under the teaching of those who have been, like yourself, under bondage,* and who are now venturing all their happiness on this cast: they have found the way which you desire to find, and have been healed of the malady under which you are groaning. Follow, then, in their paths; beginning, as they did, by external religious observances.† These will, at first, humble your will,‡ and succeed in bringing you into a state of real faith.

Now that is what I am afraid of.

Wherefore? What have you to lose?

† Then again, to prove to you that this will be the result, it is in this way that your passions will be allayed, which are the great obstacles.

O! your discourse charms and delights me.

* "*Liés comme vous.*" The copy has "tels *comme vous;*" which is an error.

† Pascal appears further to develop this consideration in a subsequent passage, in which he says, "*nous sommes automate autant qu'esprit;*" and that it is well that "*la coutume incline l'automate qui entraîne l'esprit sans qu'il y pense.*"

‡ The original here is, "*Naturellement même cela nous fera croire, et vous abêtira;*" to which the French Editor subjoins the following note:—"Montaigne had before said, '*Il nous faut* abestir *pour nous assagir.*' And St. Paul: '*Nemo se seducat: si quis videtur inter vos sapiens esse in hoc sæculo,* stultus fiat *ut sit sapiens; sapientia enim hujus mundi, stultitia est apud Deum.*'—Cor. iii. 19.

"In Pascal, as in St. Paul, '*abêtir*' ought not to be understood literally, but in the depth of Christian meaning. It is one of those expressions which true philosophy accepts and defends against the declamation of a superficial philosophy, and against the excesses of a fanatical devotion.

"There is extant an interesting letter of Arnauld to the Princess de Guemené, who was fearful lest her son should be '*abétit;*'" rendered "*degraded.*" See Provincial Letters, Appendix, p. 443.

If this discourse pleases and convinces you, know that it proceeds from a man, who did, before its commencement, and will, after its close, bend his knees before the Infinite and Unseen, to whom he is wont to submit all his desires, that he may incline your will in such way as will most conduce to your good, and to his glory; and that thus his power may harmonize with your abasement.

— [+] Habit is man's nature: whoso acquires the habit of faith believes, and cannot but act under the fear of Divine punishment. Entertain no doubt of this.

[+] Whoever acquires the habit of believing in the terrors of a Sovereign, &c.

[+] Can it then be doubted, that the soul, being accustomed to the contemplation of numbers, space, motion, believes in these things and in nothing else?

— Think you it impossible that God should be a being infinite, and without parts? I will show you then a thing infinite and indivisible: it is a point, moving everywhere with an infinite swiftness; for it is everywhere, and in all places entire.*

Let this phenomenon of nature, which beforehand seemed an impossibility, instruct you that there may yet be others with which you are unacquainted. In this your state of pupilage, settle not down in the conclusion that there is nothing more for you to learn, but that the provinces of unexplored knowledge are boundless.

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* At page 123 of the MS., there is this isolated note:—"The infinite movement, the point which fills all things; the motion in rest. Infinite without quantity,—indivisible and infinite."

+ *Conclusion of the Discourse.*

Now, let me ask, what harm can result to you from taking this course? You will become faithful, honest, humble, grateful, beneficent,—a sincere friend, a man of truth. It is true, you will no longer be immersed in tumultuous pleasures, in vain-glorious fancies, in voluptuous enjoyments. But will you have no other satisfactions in their place?

I affirm that you will be a gainer, even in the present life; and that, in every step which you take in this path, you will find so much reality in the gain, such insignificance in the risk, that you will discover, in the end, your wager to have been laid for a good, certain of realization, and infinite in value; and that you have given in exchange for it—nothing.*

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* The reader has here before him, in its original integrity, the celebrated *Wager-Essay*, which has exposed its writer to such plentiful sneers and cavils on the part of his modern annotator, M. Cousin, and which has not even escaped the measured animadversions of his admiring editor, M. Villemain. See "Provincial Letters, (Villemain's Essay,)" p. 43. He will, I think, be surprised that a course of argument so forcible, and yet so transparent, should have been subjected to such a wilful perversion on the one hand, or to so obvious a misapprehension, on the other. What is, in fact, Pascal's reasoning? Divested of the fanciful dress with which the writer's imagination has clothed it, and the mathematical allusions so habitual to his thought, it is a demonstration, familiar with the most profound theologians, of the reasonableness of faith, and the stupendous folly of unbelief. Setting aside, for his present purpose, all proofs drawn from a Divine revelation, which, however, every page of his writings shows to have satisfied and mastered his capacious spirit, he meets the unbelieving, worldly mind, on its own ground. He had before laid down the proposition that Scripture

(The following lines are interposed at p. 4 of the MS., partly above and partly below the line, like other portions of this paper,—Infinity, nothing.)

[+] Those confer a great obligation, who warn us of these our deficiencies, for it conduces to mortification of self. We learn to bear disesteem; and become increasingly accustomed to the discipline of our various defects, till gradually they are cured.

(In the margin of the same fragment, entitled "Infinite, Nothing," are the following passages:—)

" It is untrue, that we have anything in ourselves deserving of the love of others; we are unjust in seeking it. Were we indeed naturally under the unbiassed influences of reason, we should not indulge such inclinations. Our nature, however, inclines us to partiality and self-love. We ought to aim to promote the universal good; but our selfishness produces irregularity of every kind,—in war, in policy, in the general welfare, and especially in the individual man.

[+] Then it is man's will that is corrupted.

If the members of natural and civil communities seek

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alone furnishes a true knowledge of God and eternity; (p. 114;) but he now presses his argument upon those who may reject its testimony; and demonstrates, with irresistible force, that, on natural principles, to believe, involves no danger or loss, and unbelief exposes to an infinite and incalculable risk!

Apart from the mischievous (not to say malignant) fallacies which run through M. Cousin's remarks upon this paper, the dissection furnished by him of the interpolations and glosses to which Pascal's reasonings have been subjected by the misapprehension or the conscientious timidity of his successive Editors, will be found not without interest; and I should have little fear of the reader's arriving, with him, at the conclusion which he has had the boldness to enunciate,—that Pascal, in this document, has laid down principles common to "*toute l'école sceptique et sensualiste!*" (Transl.)

the welfare of the whole body, those communities themselves ought to aim to promote the welfare of that more universal body of which they are parts. + Thus ought we all, individually, to affect the universal good.

+ It follows, that we are by nature irregular and depraved.

No religious system, except the Christian, ever taught that man is born in sin. None of the philosophical sects have discovered such a fact; therefore none of them are true.

+ No sect, no religion, has permanently remained upon the earth, but the Christian religion.

— + The Christian religion alone renders man at once holy and happy. Mere worldly morality does not produce virtue and happiness together.

— The heart has inclinations of which reason knows nothing: this is seen in a thousand things. I maintain that the heart naturally loves both itself, and universal being; and alternately abandons itself to, or hardens itself against, both the one and the other. You have renounced the one, and cherished the other; are you justified, then, in loving yourself?

It is the heart, and not the reason, that discovers a God. This is faith: God is revealed to the heart, and not to the understanding.

— + A barren knowledge, opposed to common sense and to the nature of man, is the only one which has hitherto universally obtained in the world.*

* The same thought, in nearly similar terms, occurs afterwards in the MS., as follows:—"A religious system, opposed to nature, to common sense, to our own satisfaction, is the only one which has hitherto," &c., &c.

II.

+ *Various methods.*

Our mode of living in the world would vary, according to these different considerations:—

1st. Are we to remain here always?

2d. Do we not know that we cannot be here long, and are uncertain of an hour of life?

This last supposition is ours.

(*In the margin.*)—+ Heart. Instinct. Principles.

It is obvious, that you are bound to make some effort to discover the truth; for if you die without it, you are lost. "But," you say, "if God had intended that I should acknowledge him, he would have given me proofs of his will." He has done this, and you spurn them. Seek them, then; it will be for your profit.

If nothing is to be done but upon certainties, nothing at all will be done in religion; for it cannot be made a matter of demonstration. How many things are undertaken upon uncertainties;—sea-voyages, for instance, or wars! I say, then, on this supposition, nothing whatever must be attempted, for there is certainty in nothing. There is more certainty in religion, than that we shall see the morrow's sun; for it is not certain that we shall see to-morrow at all: but it is, on the other hand,

undoubtedly possible that we shall not see it. This cannot be affirmed of religion. It is not certain that it is true; but who shall say, there is any certain possibility that it is not true? Therefore, in acting as if the morrow, notwithstanding some uncertainty, should rise upon us, we act rationally.

† For it is clear, for reasons before assigned, that we are justified in acting, even upon uncertainties.*

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† "*Que me promettez-vous enfin, sinon dix ans d'amour-propre à bien essayer de plaire sans y réussir, outre les peines? Car dix ans c'est le parti.*"†

Obj. There is happiness in the hope of eternal salvation, but it is counterbalanced by the fears of perdition.

Reply. Who is it that has most reason to fear perdition?—He who is ignorant of the existence of hell, and who, if there be one, is certain of falling into it; or he who is convinced of its reality, and hopes, if there be a hell, to escape it?

* After this paragraph, follows in the MS., "St. Augustin saw that we must act upon uncertainties."—Miscellaneous Thoughts, p. 128.

† To this paragraph, which I have thought best to give in the original, is subjoined by the French Editor, the following remark:—"This unintelligible phrase is written in the MS. in a very rude hand, and ill-spelt." (Transl.)

III.

Let us not be misunderstood: we are "*automata*,"* as well as spirit; and thence it is that demonstration is not the only instrument by which conviction is to be produced. How few are those things which admit of pure demonstration! Evidence can be received only by the understanding. Habit constitutes with us, proofs of the strongest and rudest kind; it sways the unconscious machine; and that again exercises an involuntary influence over the intelligent spirit. Who ever set about to demonstrate that there will be day-light to-morrow, or that we shall all die? And yet, what is more firmly believed than both these things? It is habit, then, that convinces us of such facts as these: it is the same thing which forms many Christians, decides the belief of Mahometans and Pagans, directs to our several callings, makes soldiers, &c.† In short, it is this to which we are compelled to resort, when the mind has once obtained sight of truth, to cherish and arrest a faith which strives

* In this expression is to be traced a record of discussions which were held at Port-Royal, upon the opinions of Descartes, respecting animals, which he considered to be "*automata*." This theory, which consisted in regarding animals as pure machines, without spirit, or even feelings of pain or pleasure, excited much interest at Port-Royal. Fontaine, in the 2d vol. of his Memoirs, tells us, "They held that animals were like mere clock-work; that the cries they uttered, when beaten, were only like the sound of a spring removed from its place," &c.

Pascal, according to his niece, Madlle. Perier, followed these opinions. And Baillet also says, "This opinion respecting automata was what he approved the most in all Descartes' philosophy."—Life of Descartes, Vol. i., p. 52.

† In the margin is here written, "*Il y a la foi reçue dans le baptême, de plus aux chrétiens qu'aux païens.*"

perpetually to elude our grasp; for to have its evidences always present to the mind, is too much for its powers. It is necessary, therefore, to cultivate a more facile method of belief,—that of habit; which, without violence, artificial system, or argumentation, impels our faith,* and enlists all the powers of the understanding and the mind in its unresisting support. When belief is only the result of unwilling conviction, and the *automaton* opposes, something is wanting. Both the powers by which we are swayed must be made to co-operate in our belief: the mind, by reasons, of which to have once seen the force may be sufficient; the machine, by habit, and by that kind of constraint through which the inclinations are preserved from taking a contrary course.—+ "*Inclina cor meum, Deus.*"†

— Reason moves so slowly towards her objects, looks so many ways, and rests on such various principles, which she requires to be always present, that for want of their being so present, she is perpetually slumbering and going astray. With feeling it is otherwise; all with *it* is promptitude and action. We ought, therefore, to call in its aid to the support of our faith; otherwise it will ever be weak and vacillating.

Those who believe, without a knowledge of Scripture,

* "*Croyance.*" In the same passage, Pascal writes indifferently, "*créance*" and "*croyance.*"

† This method of influencing the mind by the "automaton,"—that is, to attain to faith by means of external impressions,—is not new, and is recommended by other masters of moral theology. It appears to us to be the same thing as what Pascal elsewhere calls "*préparer la machine.*" (See at the end of the vol., the article "Order," where this expression is several times used.)

do it because they have been endued with an innate holiness, towards which they find a conformity in the instruction they receive respecting the nature of our faith. They are convinced that they are creatures formed by God. Their desire is only to love him, and to hate themselves. They feel that they have no power in themselves; that they are incapable of drawing near to God; and that, unless God incline them to come to him, they can hold no communion with him. They perceive, also, from the nature of our religion, that our only duty is to love God and to hate ourselves; but that, being altogether corrupted and alienated from God, God took upon him the nature of man, in order to enter into union with us. Nothing more than this is needed, to convince those whose hearts are rightly disposed, and who entertain just apprehensions both of their duty and their incapacity.

I feel that I might never have had an existence; for my identity consists in thought: then I, who think, might never have existed, if my mother had ceased to live before I received existence. I am not, then, necessarily a being. I am not, therefore, eternal or infinite: but I see plainly that there is in nature, necessarily, a Being who is eternal and infinite.

Be not surprised, then, to find persons believe, in the simplicity of their heart, without reasoning. God endues them with a love to him, and a hatred of themselves. He inclines their heart to faith. Belief is never sincere and profitable, if it be not inspired by

God; and when he once influences the heart, the man believes.

This is what David well knew: "*Inclina cor meum, Deus, in* . . . . . .*

IV.

There are three means by which we believe:—reason, habit, and Divine influence.† Christianity, which is alone a religion of reason, does not admit, as her true members, those who receive her truths without divine influence: not that she excludes reason or habit,—quite otherwise; but the proper course is, that the mind should be first opened to the proofs of religion; then confirmed in them by habit; and, finally, laid low in humiliation to receive her inspirations, which alone can lead to real and salutary effects: "*Ne evacuetur crux Christi.*"‡

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* We only understand the prophecies aright, when we realize the things predicted: so the proofs of retirement from the world,—prudence, silence, &c.,—only show themselves in those who know and believe them.

— * Joseph so internally holy in the midst of a law wholly external.

— * External penance disposes to internal mortification, as humiliation does to humility. So the . . .§

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* . . . "*in testimonia tua,*" is intended.—Psalm cxviii. 26.

† "*Inspiration.*" This was at first, "*révélation.*"

‡ "*Ut non evacuetur crux Christi.*"—1 Corinth. i. 17.

§ Unfinished.

[+] *Rom.* v. 27. Glorying excluded: by what law? Of works? No: but of faith.* Then faith is not in our own power, like the works of the law, and is imparted to us in a wholly different way.

[+] Faith is the gift of God. Suppose not that we mean, it is an achievement of reason. This is not the case with other religions: they need only reason for a knowledge of their systems, and can do no more than influence the reason, when known.

The Divine method,—for God's procedures are ever of a gentle character,—is to impart religious truth to the mind by the instrumentality of the reason, and to the heart by that of grace. But to endeavour to fix truth in the heart by force and menace, is not to produce religion, but terror: "*terrorem potius quam religionem.*"

Instead of complaining that God conceals himself, you should rather be thankful that he has revealed himself so largely; and you should thank him, also, that he has not revealed himself to those who are proud of their wisdom, and are undeserving of knowing so holy a God.

—There are two descriptions of persons that know (Him):—those who are humble in heart, and cherish self-abasement, be their own intellectual attainments high or low; and others, whose minds are capable of

* From St. Paul:—"*Ubi est ergo gloriatio tua? Exclusa est. Per quam legem? Factorum? Non: sed per legem fidei.*"—Epis. Rom. iii. 27.

perceiving the truth, whatever the resistance they experience to her dictates.

Religion is suited to all orders of minds. The first class content themselves with the simple establishment of her rule; and that species of religion is such, that her mere establishment is sufficient to prove her truth. Others go as far back as to the Apostles. The more instructed go still further back, to the beginning of the world. Angels have yet better and deeper views.

Those who have become Christians without a knowledge of prophecy and evidences, are not the less capable of appreciating the truths of their religion than such as possess that knowledge. They judge through the heart, as others do through the understanding. God himself has instructed them in their faith,—the most efficacious of all teachers.*

I willingly acknowledge, that a believer who has received the truth without evidences, will not, perhaps, possess the means of convincing an avowed and practised infidel. But those who know what real religion is, will demonstrate, without difficulty, that this believer has

* Here occurs the following passage, but erased:—"It may be replied, that infidels say the same; but I answer, we have proofs that God really inclines those who love him to a belief in Christianity, and that infidels have no support for their assertions; and thus, our propositions being alike in their terms, there is this difference between them,—that the one is without proof, but the other is incontestably proved." In the margin are the following words, erased:—"'*Eorum qui amant.*'—God inclines the hearts of those whom he loves. '*Deus inclinat corda eorum.*' Those who love him; those whom he loves."

received his faith from God, although he may not be able to furnish convincing proofs of its truth to others.

† For God, having declared by his prophets, of whose truth none can doubt, that, on the advent of Christ, he would shed his Spirit upon all nations, and that the sons, the daughters, and the infants of the Church should prophesy, it is not to be questioned that the Spirit of God rests upon them, and not upon others.

V.

It is admitted, that there is usually suffering on entering upon a life of piety; but that suffering arises, not from the piety which has just received its birth in us, but from our yet remaining sinfulness. Did not sense oppose itself to repentance, and our corruption rebel against the Divine purity, pain and sorrow would be unknown. We suffer only in the proportion that our natural sinfulness resists the grace that is superinduced in us. Our spirits are lacerated by these opposing influences. Yet it were injustice to impute this conflict to those gentle attractions by which God draws us towards himself, instead of the efforts of the world to retain us under its blandishments. It is like the child which its mother has snatched from its ravisher's arms, and which ought to feel, that the pain it suffers from the tender struggle by which its rescue has been effected, does but enhance the parent's love, and should heighten

its detestation of the tyrannous force which would retain it in its grasp.* The most cruel infliction which man could experience from God in this life is, that he should be left a stranger to that warfare which He came down to earth to introduce. "I am come to send a war upon earth," he said; and, for instruction in that war,—"I am come to bring a sword and fire." Till his appearance, the world lay in a false peace.

You say, I should have readily parted with worldly pleasures, if I had possessed faith. And I, on my part, say,—You would soon have had faith, had you forsaken pleasure. Then it is for you to make the commencement. If it were in my power, I would give you faith. This I cannot do; nor can I, therefore, prove the truth of your assertion. But you can forsake pleasure, and prove whether what I say be true.

Incomprehensible that God exists, and incomprehensible that he exists not; that the soul should be united to the body, and that we should have no soul at all; that the world should be created, and should not be, &c.; that there should be original sin, or not, &c.†

There are but three classes among men:—those who

* This comparison is expressed nearly in the same terms in the sixth letter to Madlle. de Roannez. ("Miscellaneous Writings," p. 34.)

† The conclusion of this thought is wanting: whether Pascal left it unfinished; or, as seems more probably to have been the case, the paper was torn, and the conclusion destroyed.

have found God, and serve him; others, who seek, but cannot find him; and others, again, who neither seek nor find him. The first are rational and happy; the last are foolish and unhappy; the middle class are unhappy, but rational.

CHAPTER IV.

OF THE JEWISH PEOPLE.

EDITORIAL NOTICE.

If the Old Testament prepared the way for the New, and if the Jewish religion is the foundation of Christianity, a knowledge of the Jewish people ought to precede the enumeration of the proofs of the Christian religion.

For this reason, we place this chapter upon the Jews before those which treat of the Miracles, Figures, Prophecies, &c. This is also the order which Pascal himself assigned to his remarks upon the Jewish people, in that conversation, the account of which was preserved by Stephen Perier.

After carrying his auditory through the systems of the philosophers, Pascal led them to the consideration of the various religions which had prevailed throughout the world, and directed their notice especially to that of the Jews. "Lastly," says Stephen Perier, "he called their attention to the Jewish nation, and fixed their view on the extraordinary circumstances of their history. After describing all the singularities of this people, he paused to remark particularly the rule exercised over them by the means of a single book, comprehending alike, their history, their law, and their religion." * (*French Editor.*)

* Miscellaneous Writings of Pascal, p. 395.

OF THE JEWISH PEOPLE.

I. I SEE that the Christian religion must have been founded on some religious system that preceded it; and this was actually the fact.

I do not here refer to the miracles of Moses, of Christ, and of the Apostles; because at the first they failed of convincing men's minds: and I intend now only to bring forward those broad foundations of the Christian system, which are in themselves indubitable, and which no one can question.

+ It is certain that we see scattered throughout the world a peculiar race, separated from every other people, bearing the name of Jews.

— Now, I find a multitude of religious systems prevailing in various lands, and throughout all periods of time. But they neither possess a morality which satisfies my conscience, nor offer proof to convince my judgment; and I should therefore equally have rejected the religions of Mahomet and of China, of the ancient Romans and of the Egyptians, for this sole reason,—that the one carrying no stronger marks of truth than the other, and none exhibiting any preponderating evidence of authenticity, reason is compelled to refuse submission to them all alike.

But, while surveying these diversified and extravagant

systems of morals and belief in successive ages, I find, in a remote corner of the world, a peculiar people, separated from every other nation of the earth, the most ancient of them all; and possessing historical records, extending by many centuries beyond those of the most ancient of which we have any account. I learn that these people were powerful and numerous; sprung from a single progenitor; worshippers of one God; and governed by a law, which they affirm to have been received by them from His own hand. They maintain, that they are the only people on earth to whom the Deity has thus revealed his mysteries; that all men have corrupted themselves, and forfeited the divine favour; that they have all been abandoned to the evil propensities of their passions and their understandings; whence have sprung those diversified extravagances both of worship and morals which prevail among them; while they, on the other hand, have remained unshaken and unchanged. But they hold, also, that God does not intend to leave the world perpetually in this state of darkness; that a universal Liberator is destined to appear; that their own vocation in the world is to announce his advent; and they are expressly designed to be the forerunners and heralds of this great event, and to summon all the inhabitants of the world to unite with them in awaiting his august approach.

II. [+] *Falsehood of other Religions.*

[+] They have no evidences; the Jewish possess them in abundance. God defies the professors of other religions to produce similar proofs. Is. xliii. 9; xliv. 8.

III. † *Advantages of the Jewish People.*

In this enquiry the Jewish nation attracts my attention by numerous and remarkable characteristics.

First,—I find this people wholly composed of brethren; and while every other nation is formed out of a collection of infinite numbers of families, this one, although extraordinarily populous, is sprung entirely from one man; and thus, being all of one blood, and members one of another, they constitute a mighty state, yet a single family. This is unexampled.

This family, or people, is the most ancient within the memory of man;—a circumstance entitling them to peculiar veneration, and especially with reference to our present enquiry: because, if God has from the remotest times revealed himself to man, it is to them we must have recourse, to gather the earliest of his revelations.

Nor is this people remarkable only for its antiquity, but for its duration also;—having subsisted without interruption from its earliest origin to the present time. While the nations of Greece and Italy, of Lacedemon, Athens, Rome, and many others, which had their rise ages after them, have long since become extinct, these people have continued to subsist; and in spite of the repeated efforts of so many powerful states to destroy them,—as we find recorded by their historians, and as may be supposed to have been the case in the natural order of things,—still has their existence been preserved, century after century; and thus, preserved from the remotest antiquity to the present day, their annals comprise, in their mighty duration, the history of every successive

age.

The law by which this singular people is governed is, taken altogether, the most ancient in the world; it is also the most perfect in itself, and the only one that in any state has been preserved unimpaired from its first institution. This is what Josephus admirably maintains against Appion, as also the Jew Philo, in various places;—showing it to be of such antiquity, that the very name of law was not known by the most ancient nations till more than a thousand years after; in proof of which, Homer, who has treated of the history of so many states, has never made any reference to it. The perfection of these laws may be judged of from a simple perusal; which will show every enactment to have been made with such wisdom, equity, and judgment, that the most ancient lawgivers, both Greek and Roman, having received some faint traditions of their enactments, have borrowed from them their most important laws;—as is apparent from what was entitled their "Twelve Tables," and other proofs adduced by Josephus.

Yet is this law one of the severest and most stringent character, in all matters appertaining to their religious ceremonials; enforcing upon the nation, in order to retain it in allegiance to their God, a multitude of most exact and painful observances, and that under the penalty of life. Whence, it is a most surprising fact, that the code should have been constantly maintained during so many ages by a people of a most rebellious and untoward spirit; while, in every other state, the laws, though of a lenient and facile character, have been subjected to perpetual fluctuation and change.

[+] And be it observed, the Book which contains this

Law,—that which led the way to all others,—is itself the most ancient publication in the world;—those of Homer, Hesiod, and others, not having made their appearance until six or seven centuries afterwards.

IV. † *Sincerity of the Jews.*

We find them cherishing with affection and fidelity that book, in which Moses denounces them as ingrates to their God throughout the whole period of their existence; prophesies that they will remain such after his decease; and calls both Heaven and earth to witness against them, and to testify of his own copious, yet ineffectual instructions.*

He is here seen predicting that, in the end, God, in his displeasure against them, will disperse them amidst all the nations of the earth; that, in the same way as they had provoked him, by serving gods who were not their God, so he would provoke them by calling a people not His people; and solemnly directs, that these his words should be everlastingly preserved, and his writings deposited in the Ark of the Covenant, to serve as a perpetual witness against them.

† Isaiah says the same thing, xxx. 8.

V. Notwithstanding all this, is this very book, so derogatory in every view to themselves, guarded by this people, at the expense of their lives! Here is an instance of sincerity without parallel in the world; and one, moreover, that has no root or origin in the natural constitution of man.

* The word is here "*enseigné*," and is struck through in the MS.

There is a vast difference between a book composed by an individual, and dispersed by him among a people, and one which a people has itself compiled. It is in such case not to be doubted, that the book is as ancient as the people.

Every history that is not contemporaneous is liable to suspicion: therefore the books of the Sybils, of Trismegisthus, and many others which obtained credence in the world, are false, and will be found false to the end of time. It is otherwise with the *contemporaneous* writers.*

VI. *The History of China.*

I believe only histories to be authentic, when the witnesses have suffered death for their veracity.

—+ We are not now looking at the question in the general. I tell you that there are some things obscure, and some clear.

+ By this one consideration, I overthrow all your reasonings.† "But the history of China is becoming so obscure," you say. I reply, "China is obscure; but still, there is light to be found: seek it then."

+ Thus, all you advance makes in favour of one of our positions, and does not invalidate the other;—advances, and in no degree weakens our point.

+ Then let us look at it in detail, and for that purpose bring forward your documents.

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* In the copy only.

† Here, as well as elsewhere, Pascal seems to have contemplated a species of dialogue, as a variety from the didactic form of the other parts of his work; but only fragments and rudimentary portions remain. (Transl.)

— † Against the history of China . . .

— † The historians of Mexico, of the five suns of which the last was only eight hundred years since.

— † Difference between a book received by a nation, and one composed by a nation.

VII. Mark the difference between one book and another. I am not surprised that the Greeks had their Iliad, and the Egyptians and Chinese their histories.

You have only to trace their respective origins. Those fabulous historians were not contemporaneous with the events of which they wrote. Homer composed a romance, which he puts forth as such; for none doubted that Troy and Agamemnon were equally imaginary with the Golden Apple. He never, therefore, contemplated compiling a history of those things, but simply a work of amusement. He was, further, the only writer of his times: the beauty of his composition ensured its durability; every one learned and discussed it; it was committed universally to memory; and to know it was an indispensable part of education. Four centuries afterwards, all living testimony of the events of his poem was lost. No one, of his own knowledge, could say whether it was a fable, or a history: all they knew was, that they had learned it from their predecessors; and thus it came about that it passed for truth.*

VIII. † The two most ancient books in the world are those of Moses and Job,—the one of Jewish origin, and the other of Gentile; but both relate to Jesus Christ, as

* In the copy only.

their common centre and object: that of Moses, in recording the promises of God to Abraham, Jacob, &c., and his own prophecies; and that of Job, "*Quis mihi det ut*," &c., "*Scio enim quod Redemptor meus venit*," &c.

IX. [+] The zeal of the Jewish people for their law, and chiefly because they no longer have prophets.

" While they possessed prophets for maintaining the integrity of their law, the people were neglectful of it. But after their line of prophets ceased, their zeal revived.

[+] Satan, before the coming of Christ, succeeded in impairing the zeal of the Jews, because it was serviceable to them, but not afterwards.

— [+] The Jews were derided by the Gentiles, Christians were persecuted.

X. The Jews were evidently a people designed to maintain a testimony to the Messiah. Isaiah xliii. 9; xliv. 8. They preserve the sacred books, love them, and understand them not. Yet was all this predicted: the decrees of the Almighty were to be entrusted to their keeping, but to be *a sealed volume!*

XI. As the creation of the universe was beginning to fade in remoteness from man's memory, God provided one sole contemporaneous historian, and rendered a whole nation guardians of the book, in order that it might be the most authentic history in the whole world; and that all men might be made acquainted with things so

necessary to be known, and which they could not learn by any other means.

XII. [+] *Proof from Moses.*

Do we enquire why we find in Moses the lives of men so long, and their generations so few?

It is not the length of the period, but the number of generations, which wrap events in obscurity.

The transmission of truths is impaired only through the mutability of man. Here, therefore, we find in our historian two events the most memorable in the annals of the world,—the creation, and the deluge,—brought so near, so to speak, as to touch each other.

[+] Josephus conceals the disgraces of his nation; . . .

[+] Moses neither conceals his own disgrace, nor . . .*

—[+] "*Quis mihi det ut omnes prophetent?*"

[+] The people wearied him.

XIII. Shem, who had seen Lamech, who again had seen Adam, saw also Jacob, who saw those who saw Moses. This establishes the truth of the creation, and the deluge. It is also conclusive against certain persons, who affect great superiority of knowledge.

XIV. The longevity of the Patriarchs, instead of impairing the fidelity with which past events were preserved, tended rather to strengthen it. For the cause of our being so imperfectly informed of the history of our ancestors is, that our own lives were not

* Incomplete sentence in MS.

contemporaneous with theirs, and frequently they had ceased to exist before we had attained the age of reason. But at the period when life was so long, the children passed a large portion of their existence with their parents, and had the fullest opportunity of communication with them. What, then, would have been the subject of these domestic communications, but the stories of their ancestors,—the only history, in fact, which they possessed, at a time when literature, science, and the arts—those things which now occupy so large a part of the intercourse of life—were almost unknown? Thus we see how it happened, that at those periods men were likely to addict themselves especially to the care and preservation of their genealogical records. *

XV. † *Memoranda on the subject of Esdras.*

† Fabulous: the books were burnt with the temple: Fabulous by the Mach.: *Jeremiah gave them the law.*

† Fabulous: that he recited the whole by heart: Joses and Esdras remark *that he read the book.*

† *Baron. Ann.* 180: *nullus penitus Hebræorum antiquorum reperitur qui tradiderit libros periisse et per Esdram esse restitutos, nisi in* 4 *Esdræ.*

† Fabulous: that he changed the letters.

† "*Philo in vitâ Moysi:*" *illa lingua ac caracter quo antiquitus Scripta est lex sic permansit usque ad* 70.

† Josephus says that the law was in Hebrew when it was translated by the LXX.

— † Under Antiochus and Vespasian, when it was desired to abolish the books, and when there were no

* At the head of this fragment these words are written:—"*Autre Rond.*" See note * page 203.

authorized prophets, it could not be effected. And under the Babylonians, when there was no persecution and many prophets, would they have allowed them to be burned?

— † Josephus upbraids the Greeks that they did not allow . . . . (Unfinished.)

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† Tertul. *"Perindè potuit abolefactam eam violentia cataclysmi in spiritu rursus reformare, quemadmodum et Hierosolymis babylonia expugnatione deletis, omne instrumentum Judaïcæ litteraturæ per Esdram constat restauratum."* Tert. liv. 1. *de Cultu fœmin.* c. 3.

† He says that Noah might as well have restored in spirit the book of Enoch, which was lost in the deluge, as Esdras those Scriptures which were lost during the captivity.

Θεὸς ἐν τῇ ἐπὶ Ναβουκοδονοσὸρ αιχμαλωσία τοῦ λαοῦ διαφθαρεισῶν τῶν γραφῶν, ἐνέπνευσε Ἔσδρα τῳ ἱερει ἐκ τῆς φυλῆς λευι τοὺς τῶν προγεγονότων προφητῶν πάντας ἀναταξάσται λόγους, καὶ ἀποκατασησαι τῷ λαῷ τὴν δία Μωσέως νομοθησιαν. He alleges this, to prove it to be not incredible, that the LXX. should have explained the Holy Scriptures, with that uniformity which is admired in them. Euseb. l. 5, Hist. c. 8. And he has taken that from St. Irenæus, lib. 5, Hist. c. 25.

† St. Hilary, in his preface to the Psalms, says that Esdras collected the Psalms in their order. The origin of this tradition is found in the 14th chapter of the 4th book of Esdras.*

— † *"Deus glorificatus est, et scripturæ veræ divinæ creditæ sunt, omnibus eamdem et eisdem verbis et eisdem*

* All that precedes this, from the beginning of the page, is in a different handwriting from Pascal's. What follows is in his own: *"Deus,"* &c.

nominibus recitantibus ab initio usque ad finem, uti et præsentes gentes cognoscerent quoniam per aspirationem Dei interpretatæ sunt Scripturæ. Et non esset mirabile Deum hoc in eis operatum, quandò in eâ captivitate populi qua facta est à Nabucodonosor, Corruptis Scripturis et post 70 annos judæis descendentibus in regionem suam, et post deindè temporibus Artaxercis Persarum regis, inspiravit Esdræ sacerdoti tribus Levi præteritorum prophetarum omnes rememorare sermones, et restituere populo eam legem quæ data est per Moysem."

XVI. [+] *Against the fictions of Esdras.*

[+] *2 Mach. 2.*

[+] Joseph. Ant. Cyrus took occasion from the prophecy of Isaiah to release the people.—The Jews enjoyed their possession under Cyrus in Babylon.—Then they may have possessed the law.

—[+] Josephus in the whole history of Esdras does not say a word of this restoration.

[+] 4 Kings xvii. 27.

XVIII. The Creation and Deluge being past, and God having determined not again to destroy the world, nor to re-create it, nor any more to give such palpable manifestations of himself as heretofore, proceeded to take out from among men a peculiar nation, which should endure, until the Messiah should form to himself a people endued with his own spirit.*

XIX. [+] See the real facts.—While the various Pagan

* In the copy only.

philosophers were separating themselves into various sects, a certain people, the most ancient in existence, are found in an obscure corner of the earth;—maintaining that all the world except themselves are involved in error, that the Deity has made them alone the depositaries of his revelations, and that they are to enjoy an everlasting existence upon the earth; in fact, that all other sects are to be annihilated, while they are perpetually to endure. And during a period of four thousand years they persist in declaring, as a tradition authentically derived from their ancestors, that man has fallen from a state of free communion with, into entire estrangement from, his God; yet that a promise has been made to him of restoration; that their doctrines are unchanged and unchangeable; that their law contains a double meaning,—the one plain and palpable, the other mystic; and that during a period of sixteen hundred years they have possessed a class of persons, believed by themselves to be endued with the gift of prophecy, who have predicted future events.

[+] That four hundred years afterwards, they were scattered over the whole world, in order that Christ might be proclaimed everywhere; that Christ came into the world at the time and in the manner predicted.

[+] That the Jews, under the divine malediction, have been scattered throughout the earth, and yet are found perpetually existing.

After this, I reject every other religion.

— Here it is that I find a refutation of every cavil.

— It is just that a God of such perfect purity should reveal himself only to the pure in heart.

— * Henceforth this religion urges an all-powerful claim upon my affections, and its divine morality brings with it an irresistible authority; but I further find . .

And how conclusive is it, that, throughout every generation, it has been uniformly announced, that man lies under an universal corruption; yet that a restorer is destined to appear!

Further, it is not from one man only that I learn this, but from an infinite number of individuals, a whole people, throughout a thousand years endued with prophetical gifts, and expressly formed for these purposes. These books also dispersed over the world for four centuries.†

On all these grounds I stretch out glad and eager hands to my Liberator:—one, who after his advent had been predicted during a period of two thousand years, visited at last this earth, to suffer and to die for me, at the precise time, and with all the circumstantials, which had been so long foretold. Through his grace, and in the hope of an eternal union with him, I peacefully await the approach of death: nor yet do I the less gladly pass all the term of earthly existence which he allots to me, whether in such enjoyments as he sees good to dispense, or in the midst of those afflictions which, equally for my good, he causes me to pass through, and of the patient endurance of which he has set me an example. ‡

* Unfinished. Pascal seems to have written many of these notes for his own use, and has therefore satisfied himself with indicating his ideas in the most rudimentary manner.

† This line is almost illegible. The copy has *their* books, instead of *these.*

‡ It was at the end of this passage that Pascal wrote the profession of his faith, commencing with the words, "*I love poverty,*" &c. See Provincial Letters, Append., page 465.

— + We still find a people subsisting more ancient than any other in the world.

— + A whole nation predicts His coming.

+ A whole nation adores Him after his advent.

— The more closely I examine these things, the more I find my belief confirmed, both in what precedes and what followed. I see them without idols, without King; I find that Synagogue which had been predicted, and those calamities which afterwards ensued; and themselves, while hostile to us, yet the most complete witnesses to the truth of those prophecies in which their own misery and blindness are predicted. In all this, I find a perfect coherence and concatenation; and the religion in question is established as divine, in its authority, its duration, its perpetuity, its morality; in its progress, its doctrine, its results; and in the awful, yet predicted, darkness and infatuation of the Jews: "*eris palpans in meridie. Dabitur liber scienti litteras et dicet: non possum legere.*"

XX. + *Perpetuity.*

The Christian religion, which consists in the great fact of our belief that man is fallen from a state of perfection, and of communion with his Maker, into one of sorrow, remorse, and alienation from God; but that, after this life, we shall be restored to our lost privileges by a Messiah to come;—this religion has always existed upon earth. Everything else has passed away; but this, for which all else has subsisted, ever endures.

In the earliest ages of the world, men fell into every kind of irregularity; yet were there always holy persons, such as Enoch, Lamech, and others, who awaited in

patience the Anointed One promised from the beginning. In Noah's time, the wickedness of the human race rose to its greatest height; and he was privileged, by the faith of the Messiah, of whom he was the type, to be in his own person the saviour of the world. Abraham also was surrounded by idolatry, when God made known to him the mystery of the Redeemer, whose advent he hailed from afar. In the times of Isaac and Jacob iniquity had overspread the earth; but these saints led a life of faith: and the latter, when dying and blessing his children, exclaimed, in holy transport, in the midst of his discourse,—"I have waited for thy salvation, O Lord!" "*Salutare tuum expectabo, Domine.*"*

The Egyptians were infected both with idolatry and with propensity to the magical arts: the people of God even were carried away by their example. Nevertheless, Moses and other holy men believed, "as seeing Him who is invisible;" and adored Him, with eyes fixed on the eternal blessings prepared by Him for them.

After them, the Greeks and Romans instituted their false deities; the poets invented multitudes of mythological fictions; the philosophers formed themselves into countless varying sects. Yet was there ever, in the very heart of Judea, a band of chosen men, that prophesied of the coming of this Messiah, who was known to none but them.

At length, in the fulness of time, he came; and since then we have seen, in the midst of multiplied schisms and heresies, of revolutions in states, and universal fluctuation, this Church, which worships Him who has been

* Genesis xlix. 18.

worshipped from all time, preserving an uninterrupted existence. And what is beyond everything to be admired, and the strongest proof of her divinity, is, that she has endured amidst perpetual opposition and conflict. A thousand times has she been on the verge of total destruction, and yet as often has her God interposed for her deliverance, by some signal manifestations of his power. Astonishing is it to see her maintaining her even course, unyielding and undismayed, in the face of tyranny and persecution! It is not, indeed, surprising to find States subsisting, when from time to time changes of laws and concessions to necessity are made; but that . . . .* (See "*le Rond*" in Montaigne.)

Governments would perish, if the laws were not sometimes allowed to yield to necessary changes. But religion has never been subjected to these changes, and yet has never decayed. Now, either there must have been in her this flexibility of nature, or a miraculous power as a substitute for it. That Governments should be preserved by such changes is not surprising: it can, indeed, scarcely be called a continuance: in the end they perish altogether; and not one has lasted a thousand years.† But that this religion should have ever endured, yet resisted all change, proves her indeed to be Divine.

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* The paragraph is here (unhappily!) broken off, and we have been unable to find throughout the MS. any continuation. The reference to Montaigne is, doubtless, to some passage in his Essays.

† Pascal is here in error as to fact: there are Governments which have lasted above a thousand years. (French Editor.)

XXI. † *Perpetuity.*

Messiah has ever been an object of faith. The tradition handed down from Adam was yet young in the days of Noah and Moses. The prophets afterwards announced him, while successively predicting other events; the fulfilment of which, from time to time, before men's eyes, proved the authenticity of their mission, and consequently that of their promises respecting the Messiah. Christ proved his claims by working miracles; the Apostles did the same in the conversion of the heathen; and in this way have all the prophecies been accomplished, and the truth of Messiah established for ever.*

XXII. † *Perpetuity.*

Consider, now, that from the beginning of the world, the expectation, or the worship of the Messiah, has subsisted without any interruption; that there was a constant succession of holy men averring that God had revealed to them a Redeemer to be hereafter born, who should come to save his people; that, after them, a revelation was made to Abraham, that this Redeemer was to descend from a son that should be born to him; that Jacob prophesied, that, among all his twelve sons, he was to be the offspring of Judah; that Moses and the

* This fragment is, in preceding editions, introduced by the following paragraph, which may be Pascal's, but is not to be found in any MS.:—"There would be too much obscurity, if truth did not possess some characters not to be mistaken. Of these the most striking are,—that a church and visible body of holy men should ever have been preserved. On the other hand, there would have been too much clearness, had there been no differences in the church. But, to ascertain wherein truth consists, we have only to observe what those things are which have ever existed, and that nothing false has ever mingled with them."

prophets subsequently predicted the time and manner of his coming; declared that the law, then in force, was to subsist only till the appearance of the Messiah, and be superseded by one of eternal duration; and thus the law, or that of the Messiah, of which it was the type, should ever exist upon earth; and that, in reality, it has thus ever existed: that, finally, Jesus Christ did appear, under all the circumstances so predicted.—All this is, indeed, most wonderful!

XXIII. "*Non habemus regem nisi Cæsarem.*" Then Christ was the Messiah, since they had no King but a foreigner, and wished to have no other.

[+] *Contrarieties.*

— [+] The sceptre until the Messiah. Without King or Prince.

— [+] An eternal law, yet changed.

— [+] Covenant eternal, new covenant.

— [+] The law good, their precepts evil. (Ezek. xx.)

XXIV. Now, seeing all these things were so clearly predicted, why did the Jews not believe? Or, on the other hand, how have they not been exterminated* for resisting evidences so clear?

I reply, first,—All this was predicted, both that they would not believe, although on such clear evidence, and that they were not to be destroyed. And nothing tended more to the glory of the Messiah: for it was not sufficient

* "*Exterminés:*" at first, "*punis.*"

that there should be prophets; it was necessary that they should be preserved free from suspicion. Now, &c. . .

XXV. The Jews were accustomed to great and astounding miracles; and having witnessed those mighty events of the Red Sea and the land of Canaan, and regarding them as a kind of epitome* of the great things to be done by their Messiah, they were accustomed to look forward to yet more mighty interpositions, of which those of Moses were but foretastes or specimens.†

XXVI. Those who experience difficulty in believing, seek a plea for it in the unbelief of the Jews. "If the evidence was so clear," they say, "why did they not believe?" And thus they would wish, as it were, that the Jews had been believing, in order not to be condemned by the example of their incredulity. But it is that very incredulity which is the foundation of our belief. We should be much less accessible to conviction, were they not as they are. We should in that case have a larger excuse. It is wonderful, indeed, to see the Jews intensely interested in the things predicted, yet their faith most opposed to their accomplishment!

Unbelievers, in blindly abandoning themselves to their passions, ignorant of God, and not desiring to know him, verify in their own experience this fundamental principle of the faith they oppose,—which is, that the nature of man is fallen and corrupted. And the Jews, who so obstinately reject the Christian religion, verify also that

* Orig. "*Abrégé.*" † Orig. "*Échantillons.*"

other great foundation of our faith, namely, that Christ is the true Messiah, and has appeared to redeem mankind, and restore them from the corruption and misery into which they have fallen. And this appears, not less from the state in which we now see them, and which was so exactly predicted by their prophets, than from those very prophecies themselves, of which they are the depositaries; and which they inviolably preserve, as the marks by which they are to recognize their yet-expected Messiah.*

XXVII. The veil which covers the truths of Scripture from the Jews equally hides them from mere nominal Christians, and from all who do not see the evil of their own nature. But we are then inclined to listen to their dictates, and to acknowledge Christ in them, when we are brought truly to abhor ourselves.

† I do not assert that the "*Mem*"† is mystical.‡

XXVIII. Everything tends to the advantage of the elect, even the obscurities of Scripture; for they honour them the more, on account of the divine clearness of other parts: and everything tends to evil with unbelievers, even those clearer portions themselves; for they blaspheme the Scripture on account of the obscurities which perplex them.

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* This paragraph is not found in the MS. or the Copy. It was, however, published in the first edition, under Title xxviii.

† "*Mem*" is the thirteenth letter of the Hebrew alphabet; this is also further discussed in the Chapter on Prophecies, No. xxiv.

‡ In the Copy only.

XXIX. One word of David or Moses, such as "God will circumcise the hearts,"* is decisive of the spirit of the whole. Let everything else be equivocal or doubtful, as applicable to philosophy or Christianity; yet one expression of this kind is conclusive of all the rest, as one word of Epictetus determines, in an opposite direction, the whole of his writings. Up to this point there may be ambiguity, but no further.

Fragments.

XXX. † Against those who abuse certain passages of Scripture, and triumph on finding some which seem to favour their own errors.

The chapter for Vespers, Passion Sunday, prayers for the King.†

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† Explanation of the words, "He that is not for me is against me," and the contrary ones, "He that is not against you is for you."

† One may say, "I am neither for nor against you:" then this is the reply.‡

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† One of the anthems for vespers in Christmas: "*Exortum est in tenebris lumen rectis corde.*"§

XXXI. † Ample tradition of original sin, according to the Jews.

† On those words in Genesis viii.:—"The heart of man is evil from his youth."||

* Deut. xxx. 6. † In the Copy. ‡ In the Copy only. § Idem.

|| "*Sensus enim et cogitatio humani cordis in malum prona sunt ab adolescentia sua.*"—Gen. viii. 21.

† R. Moses Haddarschan:—"This evil leaven is infused into man from the hour of his creation."

† Massechet Succa:—"This evil leaven has in Scripture seven names. It is called evil, diseased, unclean, hateful, scandalous, a heart of stone, a tempestuous wind:" all these signify the malignity which is hidden and impressed upon the heart of man. Misdrach Tillim says the same thing, and that God will separate the good dispositions of man from the evil.

† This malignity of man is constantly rising against his fellow, as is written in the 37th Psalm:—"The wicked watcheth against the righteous, and seeketh to slay him; but the Lord will not leave him in his hand."

† This malignity forms the temptation of man's heart in this life, and will be his accuser in the other.

† All this is found in the Talmud.

† Misdrach Tillim on 4th Psalm:—"Stand in awe, and sin not. Stand in fear of your concupiscence, and it will then not lead you to sin;" and on Psalm xxxvi.:—"The wicked saith within his heart that there is no fear of God before his eyes;"—that is, the natural malignity of man says this to the wicked.

† Misdrach Kohelet:—"Better is a poor and wise child than an old and foolish King who will not be warned of what is to come." The child is the good, and the King is the evil in man. It is called a King, because all the members obey it; and old, because it dwells in the heart of man from infancy to old age; and foolish, because it leads man insensibly into the way of perdition.*

* "*Perdition;*" in the MS. by error, "*condition.*" The whole of this page is written in an unknown and bad hand: there are some corrections

+ The same thing is in Misdrach Tillim.

+ Bereschit Rabba on the xxxvth Psalm:—"Lord, all my bones shall bless thee, because thou deliverest the poor from his oppressor!" And is there a greater oppressor than the evil of the heart? And on Proverbs xxv.:—"If thine enemy hunger, give him bread;" that is, if the evil disposition hunger, give him the bread of wisdom which is spoken of in Proverbs ix.; and if he thirst, give him the water, in Isaiah lv.

+ Misdrach Tillim has the same sentiment; and says, "Holy Writ, in this place, means by our enemy the evil leaven, and that by giving this bread and this water it is heaping coals of fire on his head."

+ Misdrach Kohelet on Eccles. ix.:—"A great King besieged a small city:" the great King is the evil leaven; the powerful machines with which he surrounds it are temptations; and the wise and poor man who delivers it, is virtue.

+ And in Psalm xli.:—"Blessed is he who considereth the poor."

+ And in Psalm lxxviii:—"The spirit departeth, and returneth not again:" whence some have taken occasion of error as to the immortality of the soul; whereas the meaning is, that this spirit is the evil leaven which goes away with man at death, and will not return at the resurrection.

+ And Psalm ciii., the same.

by Pascal. (French Ed.) These and the following disjointed references to the Rabbinical writers are perhaps only worth attention as showing the curious and discursive bent of Pascal's studies; and, in transcribing them, it is not at all clear that he agreed with the fanciful interpretations of Scripture which they exhibit. (Transl.)

† Also, Psalm xvi.

† Principle of the Rabbis. Two Messiahs.

XXXII. † *Chronology of Rabinism.*

† The quotations of the pages are from Pugio.

Page 27. † Hakadosch, an. 200; author of Mischna, or vocal law, or second law.

† Commentaries of Mischna. { Siphra. . . . . } an. 340. { Barajetot. . . . } Talmud Hierosol. Tosiphtot.

† Bereschit Rabah, by R. Osaiah Rabah: commentary of Mischna.

† Bereschit Rabah, by Ranconi; are ingenious and pleasant discourses, historical and theological. The same author has published some works, entitled "Rabot."

† A century after the Talmud Hierosol., appeared the Babylonish Talmud, by R. Ase, with the unanimous approbation of all the Jews, who are compelled to observe the whole of its contents.

† The addition of R. Ase is entitled "Gemara," that is, "The commentary of Mischna." And the Talmud comprises both the Mischna and the Gemara.

CHAPTER V.

ON MIRACLES.

EDITORIAL NOTICE.

THE occasion is well known on which Pascal composed his views upon the Miracles. While he was composing his "*Provincials*," his niece, Marguerite Perier, an inmate of Port-Royal, was almost instantaneously cured of a complaint in her eyes which was thought to endanger her life. This cure, certainly of an extraordinary nature, and attested by some very able physicians, took place after the patient had been touched by a relic of the Holy Thorn, and was regarded by the Port-Royal as miraculous. Pascal, whose faith seems to have been more than ordinarily exalted by the contest in which he was engaged, firmly believed in the alleged miracle, and was much affected by it: he saw in it a fresh weapon which God was furnishing to aid his own cause. The Jesuits, on their part, were not backward in their attacks upon its authenticity. Pascal took up its defence; and, for the more effectual refutation of his opponents, he applied himself to an investigation of the doctrine of the Church on the subject of Miracles.

It cannot be doubted, that the greater part of the reflections which he thus prepared would have been duly revised by him, and found their place in his "Apology for Religion." The other portions, on the contrary, would have been excluded, on account of their purely polemical character. On this account they might have been, not unsuitably, placed in the first volume of this edition, at the end of the "*Thoughts and Notes on the Jesuits, the Jansenists, and the Provincials*;" but as, substantially, the objects of both the one portion and the other are the same, it has been thought better not to separate them; and they are therefore here collected under one chapter. (*French Editor.*)

ON MIRACLES.

[†] *Commencement.*

I. MIRACLES test doctrine, and doctrine tests miracles.

— There are false and true miracles. They need some marks of authenticity, or they would be useless. They are not, however, useless, but fundamentally important. Then, the rule by which they are judged should be such as should not impair the attestation which real miracles furnish to truth, and which is the principal end they are designed to serve.

— Moses lays down two such rules: that the prediction should not be fulfilled, (Deut. xviii. 22,) and that they should not lead to idolatry (Deut. xiii. 23). Jesus Christ gives one.

— [†] If the doctrine regulate the miracles, the miracles are useless to the doctrine.

[†] If the miracles regulate . . . .

[†] *Objection to the rule.*

— [†] The difference in times: one rule in those of Moses, another in our own.

[*] Unfinished in the MS.

II. *Miracle.* A miracle is a result exceeding the natural force of the means employed: a *non-miracle* a result not exceeding the natural force of such means. Thus, for instance, any cures effected by diabolical invocation are not miracles; for that does not exceed the natural power of the Devil. But . . . .

III. It is said, "Believe the Church;" but it is not said, "Believe miracles:" because the latter is natural, but not the former; the one needed to be enjoined, not the other.

IV. [+] "I should not be a Christian but for miracles," said St. Augustin.

[+] There would not have been sin in not believing on Jesus Christ, except for miracles.

[+] It is not possible to have a rational belief opposed to miracles.

V. Christ wrought miracles; after him the Apostles, and the early saints, in large numbers; for this reason, that the prophecies not being yet accomplished, but receiving their accomplishment through them, nothing could serve for a testimony to their truth but miracles. It had been predicted that Messiah should convert all nations. How could that prediction be fulfilled unless nations were converted? and how should the nations be converted to the Messiah, not having witnessed the

* Unfinished in the MS.

final results of the prophecies which give evidence of him? Now, until he had died, risen again, and converted * nations to himself, everything was not accomplished that had been predicted of him; and therefore miracles were needful during all this period. Now, however, as regards the Jews, they are no longer needed, inasmuch as the prophecies already fulfilled constitute in themselves a standing miracle.

VI. Either God has overthrown and exposed false miracles, or he has predicted their occurrence; in one way or another, he has thus elevated himself above that which is supernatural as respects ourselves, and has raised us to the same elevation.

VII. Miracles carry such force of conviction, that it was necessary for God to warn us to draw from them no conclusions contrary to His existence, however clear are the evidences in its favour: but for this they might have caused disquietude to the mind.

Therefore it is, that so far from such passages as those in 13th Deut. † invalidating the authority of miracles, nothing can tend more to confirm them. And so with

* "*Qu'il ait été mort, ressuscité*, et converti."—We give here the inaccuracy which Pascal's own MS. actually presents. He no doubt intended to write "*et* qu'il eût *converti les nations*."

† The 13th chap. of Deuteronomy says that we must not believe or hearken to those who work miracles, and seek to turn us from the worship of God. St. Mark xiii. 22, adds,—"False Christs and false prophets shall rise, and shall show signs and wonders, to seduce, if it were possible, even the elect."

Antichrist, who is to seduce even the elect, if that were possible.

VIII. * Jer. xxiii. 32. The miracles of the false prophets: in the Hebrew and the Vatable it is sorceries, or sleight of hand *(lĕgèretés)*.

Miracle does not always mean *miracles*. It is plainly so in Job xxxiii. 7. And again, Isaiah xxi. 4, and Jer. xliv. 12.

— * "*Portentum*" signifies . .

— * Isa. viii. 18: here Jesus Christ says that He and His shall be for miracles. †

— The Church has three descriptions of enemies:—the Jews, who have never belonged to her; heretics, who have left her; and nominal Christians, who destroy her from within. These several adversaries usually carry on their attacks by different methods: but here their weapons are alike. Each of them repudiating miracles, while the Church has ever sustained herself by their means against them, they have all a common interest in denying them; and have also alike availed themselves of this evasion,—that we are not to judge of doctrine by miracles, but of miracles by doctrine. There were two parties among those who followed Christ: the one, that which received his doctrine, on account of his miracles; the other, that which said . . . . ‡ There were two

* A word illegible.

† "Behold I, and the children whom the Lord hath given me, are for signs and for wonders in Israel."

‡ This sentence is unfinished: it was, perhaps, to have been according to the Evangelist,—"He casteth out devils through Beelzebub," &c.

parties in the time of Calvin. There are now the Jesuits,* &c.

IX. † "If ye will not believe me, believe at least the miracles." He brings them forward as the strongest proofs. He had told the Jews, as well as the Christians, that they should not believe all prophets. Nevertheless, the pharisees and scribes laid great stress upon his miracles, and endeavoured to prove them false, and the work of Satan; feeling that they ought to believe, if they acknowledged them to be of God.

— We are not now embarrassed by having to draw this distinction; yet is it easy to do so. Those who deny not God nor Christ, believe in no miracles but such as are undoubtedly authenticated.

† "*Nemo faciat virtutem in nomine meo, et cito possit de me male loqui.*"

No: we have here to draw no such distinction. Behold a sacred relic! Behold† a thorn, preserved from the crown that once bound the brows of the Saviour of the world, over whom the prince of this world had no power, endued with miraculous power by virtue of that blood which he shed for us! See in this fact how God has himself chosen this Establishment ‡ for the purpose of showing forth His glory.

We have not here men effecting miraculous acts by

* This passage is also incomplete in the MS. The old editions add, "And those who are called Jansenists, and who oppose them. But miracles being in favour of the Jansenists, the Jesuits resort to this general sophism of the Jews and heretics, that miracles are to be judged of by doctrine."

† The sacred thorn, deposited at Port Royal, to which the cure of Marguerite Perier was attributed.

‡ The community of Port Royal.

an occult and doubtful influence, and compelling us to a searching and difficult investigation. It is God himself; it is the instrument of the passion of his only Son, which subsisting in various places, chose this for its especial depository, that all might be invited hither, and receive, through its instrumentality, miraculous relief under their several afflictions.

X. + 1st Objection:—*Angel from Heaven.*

+ We should not judge of truth by miracles, but of miracles by truth.

+ Then miracles are useless.

+ Now they are useful, and they cannot oppose the truth.

+ Then what P. Lingende says, that God will not allow a miracle to lead to error . . . .

+ Since there must be controversies in a church, miracles should decide.

2d Objection.

+ But Antichrist is to work miracles.

+ The magicians of Pharaoh did not seduce into error. Therefore we cannot say to Christ as respects Antichrist, "You have led me into error." For Antichrist will work miracles in opposition to Christ; and thus they cannot lead into error.

+ Either God will not permit false miracles, or he will ordain them on a scale of more magnitude.

—+ Jesus Christ has existed from the commencement

of the world: this is more convincing than all the miracles of Antichrist. (Erased.)

— † If in a church miracles were effected on the part of those who had departed from true doctrine, that might lead into error.

— † The schism is visible, and the error is visible. But the schism is more indicative of error, than the miracle of truth; then the miracle cannot seduce into error.

† But, excepting in the schism, the error is not so visible as the miracle. Then the miracle would lead to error.

† "*Ubi est Deus tuus?*" Miracles prove his existence with the brightness of the lightning.

XI. This world is not the seat of truth: she wanders here and there, unrecognised by man. God has seen fit to cover her lineaments with a veil, which conceals her from those who are determined not to listen to her voice. Blasphemy overflows the earth, and that even in respect of the most transparent truths. If the great principles of the gospel are proclaimed on the one side, on the other they are contradicted; and every question is so perplexed, that common understandings can no longer discern them. Then it is asked, "What is it you do, that you should be believed rather than others? What sign do you show us? You have but words, and we have the same. If you have miracles on your side, well and good." The rule, that "*doctrine should be sustained by miracles*," is abused for the purpose of blaspheming the doctrine. And if miracles are produced, it is replied that "*Miracles*

do not suffice without doctrine:" and this is another truth adduced to blaspheme miraculous intervention.

— Christ cured the man born blind, and performed a multitude of miracles on the Sabbath-day. By that means he confounded the pharisees, who said his miracles should be guessed by his doctrine.

+ "We know Moses; but for this man, we know not who he is." Why, this is marvellous that you know not who he is; and yet he has done such miracles!

— Christ contended neither against God, nor against Moses.

Antichrist and the false prophets, predicted in both the Old and New Testaments, will openly oppose God and Christ. Which is not . . . . . * who would be an open enemy, God would not have permitted him to work miracles openly.

— + Never could it be, that in an open controversy, wherein both parties maintained themselves to be on the side of God, of Christ, and of the Church, miracles should be wrought on the false side, and none on the true.

— + "He hath a devil!" But the others said,—"Can a devil open the eyes of the blind?" †

— The proofs which Christ and his apostles drew from Scripture are not demonstrative: for they assert only Moses to have said, that a prophet should come; but this does not prove that he was that prophet,—and that is the whole question. These passages then serve only to show that herein there is no repugnance or contradiction to Scripture, but not that there is an accordance.

* Two words illegible. † John x. 20, 21.

† Now this is sufficient: an absence of contradiction, with miracles.

Whence it follows, that he deemed his miracles to be sufficient proofs of his doctrine, and that they imposed upon the Jews an obligation to receive them. And, in fact, it is the miracles especially which constituted the guilt of the Jews in their incredulity.*

XII. There is a reciprocal duty between God and man. There must be . . . †this word, "*quid debui?*" God says in Isaiah, "Charge me now." God must fulfil his promises, &c.

Man is bound to receive at the hand of God the religion which he reveals. The obligation of God towards man is, not to suffer him to fall into error. Now they would be led into error, if the workers (of) miracles promulgated doctrines which did not appear evidently false to the ordinary understanding of men, and if a greater worker of miracles had not already warned them not to believe them.

Thus, if there had been a schism in the church, and the Arians, for example, who maintain their doctrines from Scripture equally with the Catholics, had wrought miracles, and not the Catholics, this would have led to error.

— For, as a man, who professes to announce to us the secrets of Heaven is not deemed to be entitled to belief on his mere private authority, and therefore exposes himself to the doubts of the sceptic; so he, who

* This paragraph is neither in the MS. nor the copy.

† There are here two words illegible. The copy has "*pour faire et pardonner ce mot.*"

in proof of his divine credentials raises the dead, foretels events to come, removes seas,* heals diseases;—such a man silences all cavils; and the unbelief, whether of Pharaoh or of the pharisees, is the result of a supernatural hardness of heart.

— † Then when we find both miracles and doctrines received alike without suspicion, the case presents no difficulty. But if both are equally suspected, we must examine which of them presents the strongest marks of authenticity. Christ himself was suspected.

— † Bar-Jesus blinded. See here the power of God subduing that of his enemies.

— † The exorcists, under the influence of devils, crying out, "Jesus and Paul I know; but who are you?"

— † Miracles then are for the establishment of doctrine, and not doctrine for miracles.

— † Then if miracles are true, must they be conclusive of the truth of doctrines? Not necessarily. "*Si angelus,*" &c.

— † *Rule.*

† Doctrines must be judged by miracles. Miracles must be judged by doctrines. All this is true, and yet there is no contradiction.

— † Distinction must be made in times.

— You like very well to have certain general rules, by which you may cause trouble, and render everything useless. You shall, however, be prevented, my good father:† truth remains ever the same, and is invincible.

* In the copy it is "*les monts;*" but the words, "*les mers*" are plainly those of the MS., and the allusion is probably to the passage of the Red Sea.

† Doubtless Père Annat is intended here; and this is probably one of Pascal's memoranda for his controversies with the head of the Jesuits in the Provincials.

— + It is impossible, consistently with duty to God, that a man under the mask of truth, and professing conformity to God and the Church, should work pretended miracles, for the purpose of disseminating false and mischievous doctrine. That can never be.

— + Still less is it possible that God, who knows the hearts of all, should work real miracles in favour of such an one.

XIII. There is much difference between tempting, and leading (or seducing) into error. God tempts, (or tries,) but he leads none into error. To tempt, is to offer occasions, which, without imposing any necessity, lead men, if not influenced by the love of God, to do such or such things.* To lead into error, is to impose upon men the necessity of concluding and acting upon falsehood.

This is what God cannot do; and yet it is what he would do, if he could, in any controverted question, allow miracles to be performed on the side of falsehood.

It must result from this, then, that it is impossible for a man, masking his real views under the semblance of truth, and professing to be on the side of God and the Church, to perform miracles, for the purpose of disseminating false and pernicious doctrines. And still less that God, who knows the heart, should work miracles in favour of such a person.†

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* This passage is abrupt and inaccurate; but we follow faithfully the MS., as is our uniform practice.

† This and the preceding paragraph are not in either the MS., or the copy.

XV. Miracles serve to distinguish in doubtful matters between the Jew and the Gentile, between the Jew and the Christian, the Catholic and the heretic; between the calumniators and the calumniated; between the two descriptions of the cross.

But to heretics miracles would be useless; for the church, accredited by the miracles which have determined her belief, tells us that they are in error. This does not admit of doubt, because the early miracles of the church forbid faith in theirs. There is, therefore, miracle opposed to miracle; and the earliest and most illustrious on the side of the church.

XVI. † In the Old Testament, when they would serve to turn you from God.

† In the New, when they would turn you from Christ.

† These are the marks of those miracles which should be rejected. None others need be indicated.

— † Does it follow from thence, that they would be justified in excluding all the prophets who have come to them? No; they would have been guilty of sin in not excluding those who denied God, and they would equally have sinned in excluding those who did not deny Him.

— † On the question of miracles, then, we should either receive them, or see that we have very sufficient ground for their rejection. We must be satisfied that they either oppose God, or Christ, or the church.

XVII. † John vi. 26.—"*Non quia vidistis signa, sed saturati estis.*"

Those who follow Jesus Christ on account of his miracles, do honour to his power in the performance of all his wonders; but those who, under pretence of admiring his miracles, follow him in reality only on account of worldly benefits and satisfactions which they hope for from him, will forthwith repudiate the same miraculous acts, when they thwart their own advantages.

John ix. 16.—"*Non est hic homo a Deo quia sabbatum non custodit. Alii: Quomodo potest homo peccator hæc signa facere?*"

Which of the two conclusions is the most just?

"This community is not of God, for it does not admit that the five propositions are in Jansenius." The others say, "This community is of God; for striking miracles are done in it." Which of these conclusions is the most just? *

† John ix. 17:—"*Tu quod dicis? Dico quia propheta est.*" Same chapter, v. 33:—"*Nisi esset hic a Deo, non poterat facere quidquam.*"

XVIII. The method which Jesus Christ ever adopted for proving his Messiahship, was, not to rest his doctrine upon Scripture and the Prophets, but upon miracles.

— † He justifies his remitting sin by a miracle.

— † "Rejoice not in miracles," Christ said; "but rather that your names are written in heaven."

— † If they believe not Moses, they will not believe.

* This alludes to Port Royal, and its controversy with the Sorbonne. (See Provincial Letters.)

— Nicodemus confessed from the miracles of Christ, that his doctrine was from God:—"*Scimus quia Deo venisti, magister; nemo enim potest hæc signa facere quæ tu facis, nisi fuerit Deus cum eo.*" (John iii. 2.) He judges not of his miracles by his doctrine, but of his doctrine by the miracles.

— The Jews possessed a system of doctrines from God, as we have one from Jesus Christ, and it was one confirmed by miracles; and they were forbidden to believe in all workers of miracles, but were directed to refer to their High-Priests, and abide by their instructions. And thus, whatever reasons we can adduce for withholding belief in the workers of miracles, they had the same in regard to their prophets.

And yet they were very culpable, on account of their miracles, in rejecting their prophets, and Christ; and they would not have been culpable if they had not seen the miracles. "*Nisi fecissem, peccatum non haberent.*" (John xv. 24.)

[+] Then the current of belief runs in force of miracles.

— [+] Prophecy is not called miracle, since St. John speaks of the first miracle in Cana; and then of our Saviour's discourse with the Samaritan woman, showing his knowledge of her secret history; while he calls the cure of the centurion's son the second miracle.

XIX. If there had been no false miracles, we should have possessed absolute certainty.

If there had been no rule for discerning them, miracles would have been useless, and there would have been no rationality in believing them.

† Now, in human affairs, no certainty is to be obtained, but reason must be exercised.

— The Jews, who were appointed to extinguish nations, and sovereignties, have become the slaves of their sins; and Christians, whose calling was to be servants and tributaries, are privileged children.

— † Judges xiii. 23. If the Lord had meant to slay us, he would not have showed us such things.

— † Hezekiah. Sennacherib.

— † Jeremiah Hananias, the false prophet, died the seventh month.

— † 2 Macc. iii. The temple, when about to be pillaged, miraculously rescued.

2 Macc. xv.

— † 1 Kings xvii. The widow to Elisha, who had raised her child to life,—"By this I know thy words are true."

— † 1 Kings xviii. Elijah with the prophets of Baal.

— In the contentions between the true God and idolaters, on religious truth, it has never been seen that a miracle was wrought on the side of error, rather than of truth.

XX. † *Reasons for not believing.*

John xiii. 37:—*Cum autem tanta signa fecisset non credebant in eum, ut sermo Isaïæ impleretur:* excæcavit, *etc. Hæc dixit Isaïas quando vidit gloriam ejus et locutus est de eo.*

— † *Judæi signa petunt, et Græci sapientiam quærunt.*

† *Nos autem Jesum crucifixum.*

† *Sed plenum signis, sed plenum sapientia.*

† *Vos autem Christum non crucifixum et religionem sine miracculis et sine sapientia.*

— Whatever causes us to disbelieve true miracles is a want of divine love. John: *Sed vos non creditis quia non estis ex ovibus.* That which makes us believe false ones is a want of love.

2 Thess. ii.

XXI. † *Foundation of Religion.*

† Miracles. Then does God oppose the fundamental principle of our faith in himself?

† If there be a God, there must be faith in him on the part of men. Now Christ's miracles are not predicted by Antichrist; but antichristian miracles are predicted by Christ. Therefore, had Jesus not been the Messiah, he would have been the cause of error; but Antichrist cannot be the cause of error.*

When Christ predicted the miracles of Antichrist, could he contemplate destroying the faith in his own miracles?

Moses foretold the coming of Christ, and commanded that he should be believed. Christ foretold Antichrist, and forbad that he should be believed.

It was impossible, under Moses, to forbid the belief of Antichrist, who was then unknown. But it is easy in the time of Antichrist to believe in Jesus Christ, who is known.

There exists no reason for the belief in Antichrist, which does not equally exist for belief in Christ; but there are reasons for belief in the latter, which do not exist for the former.

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* Orig.: "*Mais l'Antechrist ne peut bien induire en erreur.*" The above rendering is almost literal, but the original is obscure. (Transl.)

XXII. † *Miracles.*

— It is painful to find ourselves in an exception to a general rule. We ought even to be firm, and opposed to exceptions. Yet, as it is certain that in some cases exceptions must exist, we should judge justly, although with firmness.

XXIII. † Jesus Christ declares that the Scriptures testify of him, but he does not specify the instances.

— Even the prophecies could not prove the truth of his Messiahship during his life-time; and therefore there would have been no guilt in not believing Christ before his death, had not his miracles been sufficient to confirm his doctrine. Now those who did not believe in him while living, were, as himself certified, sinners, and without excuse. Thence it follows that there must have been a sufficiency of proof, which they resisted. As, therefore, they possessed no such express designation* of him, but witnessed only his miracles, it is evident that these latter, when not opposed to his doctrine, should have sufficed for their conviction, and he ought to have been believed for them.

† John vii. 40. Disputes between the Jews, as between Christians in the present day.

The one portion believed in Christ; the other rejected him, on account of the prophecies which announced that he was to be born in Bethlehem. They ought to have taken more pains to ascertain the actual fact; for, as his miracles might have carried conviction to their minds, it was their duty to investigate these alleged contradictions

* "*Exposition,*" the word that occurs here is illegible in the MS.; and the above is inserted only conjecturally. (French Editor.)

in his doctrine to Scripture; and the obscurity of which they complained furnished them no excuse, but served only to blind them the more.

† So, they who in our day refuse to believe in miracles, on account of an alleged imaginary contradiction, are not justifiable.

† The people, believing him on account of his miracles, the pharisees said,—"This people who know not the law, are accursed; but have any of our rulers or the pharisees believed on him? for we know that no prophet proceedeth out of Galilee." Nicodemus replied,—"Does our law judge any man before it hear him?"

XXV. "If I had seen a miracle," some will say, "I should be converted." How can they be certain that they would experience that of which they know nothing? They imagine that conversion consists of a passing act of homage to God, and a species of intercourse framed on mere human ideas. True conversion is an annihilation of ourselves before the Infinite; a consciousness that we have committed innumerable offences against him, and are justly exposed to destruction at his hands;—it is an acknowledgment that we are dependent upon him for all things, and deserve nothing from him but ignominy. It consists in a conviction that between God and ourselves there is an invincible opposition; and that it is through a Mediator alone that any communion can be restored.

A miracle, it is alleged, would confirm my faith. This is said by those who have never seen one. There are

certain considerations which, looked at from a distance, appear to bound our view; but when approached, the sight begins to extend beyond them.* Nothing can arrest the activity of the spirit. There is no rule, it is said, without exception; nor any truth so general, as to have no aspect in which it is deficient. It is enough that it is not absolutely universal, to give us the means to apply the exception to the present subject, and say,—"Such a thing is not always true; then there are cases in which it does not apply." It only remains to show that the one in question is of this kind; and we shall be very inapt, or very unfortunate, if we do not find such cases at one time or another.

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† The purpose of miracles is not—to convert, but to condemn.

XXVI. † *Miracles.*

† I detest your sceptics of miracles! Montagne in two places of his work, treats the matter very properly: in the one, he shows his discreet habit of mind; and in the other, that he is a believer, while he ridicules the incredulous. †

XXX. † Title:—"*Whence is it that we give such belief to deceivers, who assert they have seen miracles, and give none to those who say they are in possession of secrets for making men immortal, or renewing their youth?*"

* This phrase occurs, in nearly the same terms, in the "Miscellaneous Thoughts," No. 120.

† See Essays, Book i., chap. 26, entitled, "The folly of estimating truth or falsehood by our own apprehensions."

Having considered how it happens that we yield faith to so many impostors, who pretend to sovereign remedies, and even trust our lives in their hands,—the real cause seems to me to be, that, among many false, there are still some true ones: for it is not possible that there should be so much falsehood, and that it should obtain the measure of belief it does, were there not with it some mixture of truth. Had there been no such great specifics, but all the diseases in question had been incurable, it is impossible that men should have believed such remedies to exist; and still more, that such credulity should have been shown towards those who pretended to their possession. In the same way, if a man were to boast he possessed a secret by which he could preserve his life for ever, he would not be believed, because no such instance has ever been known in the experience of men. But, inasmuch as there exist various remedies, which have, on the soundest experience, been proved efficacious, men's belief has been influenced by them, and what has been found to be possible in some cases, is deemed equally so in others. People usually reason thus:—"Such a thing is possible; therefore, it is;"—because, not being capable of denial in the general, inasmuch as particular instances have been proved to be true, the generality of persons, unable to distinguish those particular cases from the mass, make up their minds to a belief in the whole. As an instance of this, the reason why so many unreal effects are believed to be produced by the moon, is, that there are some that are real,—such as the tides of the sea.

[†] It is the same with prophecies, miracles, divinations

by dreams, lots, &c.; for had there been no truth in these things, there would have been no belief given to them: and thus, instead of concluding that there are no real miracles, on account of the multitude of false ones, it should be held, on the contrary, that some are certainly true, because so many are false; and that the cause of there being false ones, is that there were some that were true.

+ The same reasoning should hold in regard to religion: men could never have invented so many false systems, had there not been one that is true. An objection to this may be that among utterly savage nations, some kinds of religion are found to exist; but the answer to this is, that they are the results of tradition, as is the case with the deluge, circumcision, &c.*

XXXI. Having weighed the cause of there being so many false miracles, revelations, sorceries, &c., it appears to me to be because there are some that are true; for otherwise it would have been an impossibility that they should have obtained belief. But for this, these fictions could not have been devised on the one part, or received on the other. But, inasmuch as certain great facts of this description have really existed, and have been admitted by the highest intelligences, this has caused the generality of persons, of less reflecting minds, to be accessible to impostures also. Therefore, instead of concluding that no miracles are real, on account of the multitudes of such impostures, we should rather infer

* This paragraph, which seems the development of that which immediately follows, is in the handwriting of Madame Perier.

the fact of some being true, from the number of the false; and in the same way argue, that the multitude of false religious systems prove the existence of one that is true. The difficulties arising from the species of religions found among savage tribes, is answered by the fact of certain traditions having reached them, such as the deluge, circumcision, &c. The mind of man, having thus received a certain measure of truth, has become accessible to a multitude of false impressions of this . .*

* The word, "*espèce*," is doubtless here to be added, although wanting in the MS. This, like the preceding paragraph, is in the handwriting of Madame Perier, and both are written on the reverse of a letter addressed to Pascal. In the corner is the date 19th February, 1660.

CHAPTER VI.

ON FIGURES,

OR

FIGURATIVE TERMS.

EDITORIAL NOTICE.

In one of the notes collected at the end of this volume, under the title of "Order," Pascal mentions the Chapter on "Figures" in these terms:—"In the chapter on *Fundamentals* should be introduced that part of the one on *Figures* which assigns the cause of figurative language."

As in the MS. there is no other reference to the chapter on "Fundamentals," we have thought it best to reject that title, and have abandoned the subdivision which seems to have been contemplated by the writer of the subject-matter into two separate chapters.

As to the order of placing the Chapter on "Figures," it is indicated in the narrative of the conversation in which Pascal laid down the plan of his proposed Work; it there appears, that after descanting upon the Jewish people, he addressed himself to the discussion of Miracles, and afterwards of Figures. (*French Editor.*)

†ON FIGURES.

I. † *Reasons for their use.*

† It was a carnal people that was addressed; and they were made the depositary of spiritual communications. (Erased.)

In order that faith should be yielded to the Messiah, it was necessary that his coming should be preceded by prophecies, and that those prophecies should be preserved by a people not obnoxious to suspicion, endued with extraordinary diligence, fidelity, and zeal, and known throughout the whole world.

To accomplish these ends, God made choice of this carnally-minded people, and made them the depositaries of the prophecies, which predicted the Messiah under the character of the Liberator, and the dispenser of those temporal benefits which were the objects of this nation's attachment. They were by this means endued with a signal zeal on behalf of their prophets; cherishing, in the sight of all the world, those writings in which the Messiah was foretold, and proclaiming to all nations, that he was hereafter to come, and that his appearance was to be in the manner described in those archives of theirs, which were open to the whole world. It was thus, that this nation, deceived by the ignominious and sordid circumstances of the Messiah's advent, became,

from his ardent expectants, his most cruel foes. Thus, they constitute a people, of all others the least to be suspected of bias or partiality; the most exact and zealous in supporting their law and their prophecies, and the most sedulous to transmit them uncorrupted to future times.

It is for these reasons, that the prophecies carry within them a hidden and spiritual sense (to which this people were opposed) under the cover of carnal objects, which were conformable to their taste. Had the spiritual meaning been revealed to them, they would have been incapable of appreciating it; and would thus have lost their ardour for the preservation of their writings, and the enforcement of their ceremonials. And, on the contrary, if they had been rendered capable of entering into these spiritual promises, and had preserved them unalloyed to the coming of their Messiah, their testimony, being that of friends and partisans, would have been stripped of its force. It was, therefore, an advantage, that the spiritual meanings were veiled from their perception. But, on the other hand, if the interpretation of these writings had been entirely concealed, and in no degree apparent, then they could not have served the purpose of testifying to the Messiah. What, then, was really the case? In the greater portion of the passages the meaning was concealed under temporal images; while in some others it was manifested so plainly,—exclusive of the various predictions as to time, and the state of the world,—that the interpretation stands out as clearly as the sun in the noon-day heavens. And the spiritual sense is further, in some parts, so apparent, that nothing but that blindness which the influence of the flesh

produces in the minds that are enslaved by it, could ever remain insensible to its convictions.

This then was the scheme of Infinite Wisdom. The true meaning is, in numberless instances, concealed; in a few, it is disclosed: yet such is the method adopted, that the instances in which it is thus hidden are equivocal, and may admit of a twofold sense; those, on the other hand, in which it is revealed, are palpable, and can be interpreted only in a spiritual manner.

In this way, they could not lead into error; and it was only by a people of a gross and carnal mind, that they could possibly be misapprehended.

When, for instance, we find promises made to them of the most copious benefits, what but their sensuality, determining the meaning of these things into earthly good, prevented their understanding them of the only true blessings? Those who knew no real good but in their Maker, referred these promises to Him alone. There are two paramount tendencies, to which the will of man is subservient,—sensuality, and charity,—self-love, and the love of God. Not that the former may not (in a certain sense) consist with faith; and the latter, in its measure, with the possession of earthly good. But sense seeks its selfish advantages from God, while its enjoyments are found in the world: charity, or divine love, makes use of the world, but has its pleasure in God.

Now it is the final end, which gives truth and reality to things. Whatever hinders our attainment of that end is our *enemy*. Thus, creatures, although good in themselves, are enemies to the righteous when they

turn them away from God; and God himself is the enemy of those whose lusts he disturbs.

In this way, the term *enemy*, being dependent on our final end, the righteous understand it of their lusts, and the carnally-minded of the Babylonians; the terms, therefore, presented no obscurity to any but the unrighteous. This is what is said by Isaiah:—"*Signa legem in electis meis;*"* and in this sense, Jesus Christ was to be "a stone of stumbling." † But, "blessed are they who shall not be offended at him." ‡ Hosea, in his last chapter, expresses this perfectly:—"Who is wise, and he shall understand these things? prudent, and he shall know them? for the ways of the Lord are right, and the just shall walk in them: but the transgressors shall fall therein." §

Those, therefore, to whom the Saviour was a scandal, and who rejected and crucified him, are the very preservers of those books which testify of him, and which predict that he should be rejected and scandalized. Thus, they themselves bear about with them the proofs that he was the Messiah, while they rejected him; and he has been equally testified to, both by the believing Jews who received him, and by the unbelieving who rejected him: both the one and the other were the subject of prediction.

II. And yet, these Records, composed in such a manner, that while the one portion were enlightened the other remained in darkness, left in those who were thus blinded the traces of that truth which was discerned

* Isaiah viii. 16. † Isaiah viii. 14. ‡ Matthew xi. 16.
§ Hosea xiv. 9.

by the others; for the visible benefits which they enjoyed from their God were so great, and partook so much of a Divine character, that it could be no subject of doubt, that he possessed the power to confer on them such as were invisible, and among these, the greatest of all, the gift of a Messiah.*

One of the chief reasons why the Prophets veiled the spiritual benefits which they promised under the figures of temporal good, was, that they had to do with a carnally-minded nation, and were to make them the depositary of a spiritual testament.†

III. + *Figures.*

God, designing to form for himself a holy people, separating them from every other nation, delivering them from their enemies, and bringing them into a place of rest, gave the promise of these events beforehand; and, by his prophets, predicted both the time and manner of their occurrence. Nevertheless, in order throughout all time to sustain the hope of his elect, he kept before their eyes images of these things, and never left them without the assurance both of his power and his willingness to effect their salvation. At the creation of the world, Adam was a witness hereof, and was, moreover, the depositary of the promise of the Saviour, who was to be born of the woman. While the creation was so recent, that men had not lost from recollection their origin and

* Neither in the MS. nor copy, but published in the first edition.

† This paragraph, which was only published in the edition of 1678, is neither in the MS. nor the copy.

their fall; while, notwithstanding, those to whom Adam had been known, no longer remained on earth; God sent Noah, preserving him alive while he destroyed the whole world by a miracle; which sufficiently marked both his power and his will to save man, and to fulfil the promise he had given of a final redeemer of his race, from the woman's seed.

This miraculous event was abundantly calculated to support the hope of the . . . .

The memory of the deluge was thus preserved among men; for while Noah yet lived, God renewed his promises to Abraham; and while Shem yet survived, Moses was sent, &c.†

IV. Isaiah vi. The Red Sea an image of redemption.

— *Ut sciatis quod Filius habet potestatem remittendi peccata, tibi dico: Surge.* ‡

— God, wishing to show that he could form a holy people, endowed with inward sanctity, and destined to eternal glory, typified them by visible objects. As nature is a figure of grace, he has done that in the beneficences of nature which he designed to do in those of grace, that it might be seen, by what he achieved in the visible, how much he was capable of achieving in the invisible.

With these views he saved this his own people in the deluge; he raised up Abraham; he redeemed them from their enemies, and brought them into a place of rest.

God's purpose in thus saving his people from the deluge, and raising up a nation from Abraham, was

* Unfinished. † This is an anachronism. ‡ Mark ii. 10, 11.

not merely to bring them into a land of ease and fertility.

And even grace is not the final object, but is only a type of glory. It was prefigured by the law, and itself prefigures glory;* it is its type and principle, or cause.

— The life of ordinary men resembles that of the saints. All alike seek their own satisfaction, and differ only in the object from which it is to be obtained. They equally regard as enemies those who impede them in its search. God has, in this way, shown by natural objects his power in the things that are invisible.

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† V. *That the law was typical.*

† *Figures.*

† This is the key which St. Paul furnishes to us.— The letter kills.— Everything was in figure.— It was necessary that Christ should suffer.—A God humbling himself.

— † Circumcision of the heart, a true fast, a true sacrifice, a true temple. The prophets showed that all these things were to be spiritual.

† Not the meat which perishes, but that which endures.

— † You must be made free indeed. Then every other freedom is but a figure of the true liberty.

— † I am the true bread of heaven.

VI. † The Old Testament is but a series of cyphers.

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* Original, "*grace.*" This was, however, evidently intended for "*glory.*" The whole of this fragment is a collection of detached and incomplete notes, unrevised, and put down on paper with the utmost rapidity and negligence.

VII. + Two errors: the one, to take everything too literally; the other, too spiritually.

VIII. + *Figures.*

+ The prophets continually used figures,—the girdle, the beard, the burned hair, &c., &c.

IX. + *Figures.*

When once the hidden meaning of these has been laid open, it is impossible not to apprehend it. When the Old Testament is read with this view, we ask, Were the sacrifices literal? was the parentage of Abraham the true cause of God's friendship? was the promised land the real place of rest? No; then they were figures. If, in the same way, we consider all prescribed ceremonials, and all commandments which have not charity (or love) for their end, we shall find that they are only its figures, or types.*

— + All these sacrifices and ceremonies, then, were either figures, or things without meaning. There are, however, some things too plain and too elevated to be suspected to have no meaning.

(*In the margin:* For instance, did the prophets limit their views to the Old Testament, or look beyond them?)

X. There are some figures clear and demonstrative; others, however, seem a little forced in their application, and are apparent only to such as are predisposed to entertain them: these latter are like those of the Apocalypse.

* The following are the original terms of the above passage: "*Qu'on voie de même toutes les cérémonies ordonnées et tous les commandements qui ne sont pas pour la charité, on verra que c'en sont les figures.*"

But the difference is, that in them there is nothing that can be regarded as unquestionable; so that there is nothing so unsound, as to attempt to prove that the latter are as palpable as the former: for they have nothing demonstrative in them. They rest on a different footing. They are things which ought not to be equalized and blended together; for they have an appearance of similarity in one point of view, but in another are wholly dissimilar.

† There are some things which are for the most part so clear, that, when ascertained to be divine, the obscurities mixed up with them even should be treated with reverence.*

XI. † *Types.*

† The Jews and the Egyptians clearly prefigured in those two circumstances narrated by Moses:—the Egyptian ill-treating the Jew, Moses revenging him by slaying the Egyptian, and the Jew's ingratitude thereon.

XII. *Figurative Terms.*

— † Key to the cypher.

† "*Veri adoratores. Ecce Agnus Dei qui tollit peccata mundi.*"

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† *Figurat.*

† The terms, sword, crown.

"*Potentissime.*"

XIII. *Figures.*

† Do all things according to the pattern shown thee

* In the margin there occur here the following words, erased:—"It is like persons conversing in an obscure language; persons not understanding it regard it as mere jargon."

on the mount. On which St. Paul says, that the Jews prefigured celestial things.

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† Moses, Deut. xxx., promises that God should circumcise their hearts, that they might be rendered capable of loving him.

XIV. † *Fig.*

† Saviour, Father, Sacrificer, Hostage, Nourishment, King, Sage, Legislator, Afflicted, Poor: all intended to form a people whom he purposed to lead, support, and spread over the earth. . . . . *

† *The offices of Jesus Christ.*

It was his design to produce a great people,—elect, holy, chosen; to guide, support, and bring them into a place of rest and sanctity; to consecrate them to the service of God, and make them his temple; to reconcile them to God, and save them from his wrath; to deliver them from the service of sin, to which the whole race of man is subjected: to give this people laws, and write them in their hearts; to offer himself for them to their offended God; become a sacrifice, a spotless hostage for them; and to be himself the sacrificer, offering up himself, his body and blood, like bread and wine, a sacrifice to God.†

Prophecies.—"*Transfixerunt*" ‡ (Zech. xii. 10.)

That he should come as the deliverer, who should

* Unfinished.

† "*Et lui-même sacrificateur, devant s'offrir lui-même son corps et son sang, et néanmoins offrir pain et vin à Dieu.*"

‡ The remainder of the verse quoted is, "*Et aspicient ad me quem confixerunt.*" Commentators deem this passage an allusion to the sufferings of the cross.

bruise the serpent's head; should deliver his people from their sins, "*ex omnibus iniquitatibus*," bring in a new and everlasting testament; that he should institute another priesthood after the order of Melchizedek, which should be eternal in its existence; that this, his Anointed, should be glorious, powerful, and mighty,—yet appear in so abject a condition, that none should recognise him, or be conscious of his ineffable dignity; that thus he should be rejected, and finally slain; that his own people, after their denial of him, would be disowned by him; that heathen nations would acknowledge and turn to him; that he would forsake his favoured Zion, to reign in the very seat of idolatry; that the Jews, nevertheless, would subsist to the end of time, inasmuch as he himself should be born of the tribe of Judah, and *that*, after monarchy had become extinct in the nation.

— † "*Ingrediens mundum.*"

— † Stone upon stone.

— † That which preceded, and that which followed. The whole Jewish people existing, yet dispersed.

XV. † *Figures.*

It being God's purpose to dispossess his own people of mere perishable good, in order to prove that it was not through inability to endow them with it, created the Jewish people.

The Jews had long indulged the carnal reflections, that God had loved their father Abraham, and all his offspring; that on this account he had multiplied and distinguished them above every other nation, and had

not suffered them to mix and ally themselves with any; that, when oppressed under Egyptian bondage, he had delivered them by working mighty miracles on their behalf; that, while wandering in the wilderness, he had fed them with manna from heaven; that he had led them into a fair and fertile land, formed them into a powerful monarchy, erected a gorgeous temple for their worship, and instituted the rites of sacrifice for their purification; and that he finally designed to send them a Messiah, in order that the whole world might be subjected to them. The very time even of his coming was predicted.

While all were wrapped in these carnal and erroneous expectations, Christ appeared in the time predicted, but with none of the splendours which had been anticipated. They did not believe, therefore, that it was himself. After his decease, St. Paul was raised up, to teach men that all these things had befallen in figures; that the kingdom of God consisted not in flesh, but in the spirit; that the enemies of man were not the nations of Babylon, but their own passions; that God took not pleasure in temples made with hands, but in the pure and contrite spirit; that bodily circumcision was profitless, but that of the heart was demanded; that Moses had not given the true bread from heaven.

— Thus it was, that God, not being willing to reveal these things to this people, seeing they had shown themselves unworthy of them, and being, notwithstanding, desirous that they should be predicted, in order that they might be afterwards believed, caused the periods of the events to be plainly foretold, and explicitly described,

(although always in figurative language,) that by these means, such as were addicted to indulge their fancy in mere figures should rest in them;* while those who were interested in the things prefigured might discern them in the types.

† Everything which tends not to love (*charité*) is mere figure.

— The sole end of Holy Scripture is love (*charité*).

— Whatever tends not to this end is but its figure; for, as there is but one end, everything that does not expressly and literally promote that end is but a figure.

— God thus diversifies this one law of charity, in order to satisfy our love of variety; and by that diversity leads us to the supply of our one great and only want. One thing only is needful for us, but we love variety: God satisfies both our necessity and our inclinations by means of this diversity.

— So absorbed were the Jews in these typical representations, and so intent upon their fulfilment, that they repudiated the reality when it appeared at the time and in the manner predicted.

— The Rabbis interpret figuratively the "bosom of the spouse," and everything that does not express their one idea of temporal good.

† And Christians interpret even the Eucharist as a figure of the glory which is reserved for them.

XVI. † *Figures.*

The proof that the Old Testament is figurative, and that, by temporal goods, the prophets understood higher

* Here in the MS. are underlined the words, "*Je ne dis pas bien.*"

blessings, is, 1st, that the opposite to this would have been unworthy of God; 2d, that their discourses, while plainly expressing the promises of the temporal good, declare, nevertheless, that their language is obscure, and their meaning not yet revealed. Whence it is evident, that this meaning is not that which lay on the surface, and that, consequently, they are to be understood as referring to other sacrifices, another deliverer, &c. They say themselves, that their true meaning will be only conceived at the end of time. Jeremiah xxxiii., close.

The 3d proof is, that their language is inconsistent with itself, and contradictory; so that if it were to be supposed that when the terms *law* and *sacrifice* are used, nothing more is meant than those prescribed by Moses, there would be gross and palpable incongruity: when, therefore, we find these contradictions in the very same chapter, it is manifest that other things were intended.

XVII. The Synagogue did not perish, because it was a figure; but inasmuch as it was nothing more than a figure, it has fallen into degradation. The figure has always subsisted, in order that the church might be ever visible, either in the type by which it was promised, or in its reality.

XVIII. † *Particular Figures.*

† Double law, double tables of the law, double temple, double captivity.

XIX. † *Figures.*

— † Jesus opened their minds to understand the Scriptures.

There were two great revelations. 1st. That everything had been hitherto in figures: "*verè Israelitæ, verè liberi,*" true bread from heaven. 2d. A God humbling himself to the death upon the cross. It behoved Christ thus to suffer, that he might enter into his glory, and overcome death by his own death.

(Mem.:—† To discourse upon a too figurative interpretation.)

XX. † *Figures.*

† A painting may represent absence and presence, pleasure and displeasure. Reality, on the other hand, excludes absence and displeasure.

— In order to ascertain whether the law and the sacrifice be realities or figures, we must observe whether the prophets, when speaking of these things, so limit their views and ideas to them, as if they saw in them nothing more than this primary connexion; or whether they looked beyond them to other things, of which they were the types. In a portrait we see the thing itself which is represented. We have nothing more to do, then, than to examine with care their expressions.

When they say it shall be eternal, are they to be understood as speaking of that dispensation which they affirm shall be changed? And so of the sacrifices, &c.

— A cypher has two meanings. If we intercept a letter of importance, whose sense we think clear, and which yet, we are told, is dark and mysterious;—so obscure, in fact, that we seem to look upon its contents without seeing them, and to listen without hearing them;—what can we conclude, but that it is a cypher,

bearing a double meaning? and, yet more, is this the case, if, in the literal and superficial sense, we find certain palpable inconsistencies? How should we, in such a case, prize those who are capable of interpreting these cyphers, and discovering to us their hidden meaning! This is what is done by Christ and his Apostles. They have lifted the seal, they have drawn aside the veil, and discovered the spiritual meaning of these emblems. From them we learn that man's enemies are his evil passions; that the Redeemer, and his reign, were to be spiritual; that two advents awaited him,—one of abasement, to humble his pride, — the other of glory, to reward his humility: in a word, that Jesus was to unite in his person the ineffable glory of the Godhead and the inferiority of man.

Again, the prophets distinctly announced, that Israel should ever retain the favour of God, and that the law should endure perpetually; while they also said, that the meaning of these predictions must remain veiled and unintelligible.

XXI. It was not allowed to sacrifice out of Jerusalem, which was the place that the Lord had chosen, nor even to eat the tithes elsewhere. Deut. xii. 5; xiv. 23, &c.; xv. 20; xvi. 2, 7; xi. 15.

Hosea predicted there should be no king, no prince, no sacrifices, no idols; which is accomplished in the present day, inasmuch as no sacrifices can lawfully be offered out of Jerusalem.

[+] *Figures.*

If the law and the sacrifices are to be regarded as

realities, they must be uniformly pleasing to God. If they are figures, they must be sometimes pleasing and sometimes displeasing to him.

Now, throughout the whole of Scripture, we find this latter to be the case. It is there stated that the law and the sacrifices are to be changed; that the nation should be without king, without prince, without sacrifice; that a new covenant is to be formed, and the law renovated; that the precepts they had received were not perfect; that their sacrifices are an abomination to him; that God had not required them at their hands.

On the other hand, it is elsewhere said, that the law shall endure for ever; that the covenant with his people and their sacrifices shall be everlasting; that the sceptre shall never depart from them, until the eternal King shall come.

Do all these passages indicate reality? No. Are they then mere figure? No; but they are both reality and figure. Now the former, from which reality is excluded, prove that they were figurative.

All these passages, taken in combination, cannot be understood literally; all may be received as figures: then they are not literal, but figurative.

+ "*Agnus occisus est ab origine mundi.*" * The judge, the sacrifice.

XXII. *Contradiction.*

A good portrait cannot be painted without harmonizing opposite traits; and it is not enough to delineate one

* Rev. xiii. 8.

class of qualities, without blending with them contrary ones: to understand an author properly, we ought to collate all his contradictory passages.

Thus, to understand the Scripture, there should be a certain sense in which contradictory passages may be brought into accordance. It is not enough that there should be one in which various according passages are made to harmonize; but one wherein even opposites may unite.

All authors have a sense in which opposing passages agree, or they are altogether without meaning. This latter was by no means the case with the Scriptures and the prophetical writings. They were fraught with meaning. We must then seek a meaning in them which shall harmonize all contrarieties.

This true meaning is assuredly not that which the Jews assigned to them: it is in Jesus Christ alone that all their contrarieties are brought into agreement.

The Jews knew not how to reconcile the termination of royalty and princedom, predicted by Hosea, with Jacob's prophecy.

If we interpret the law, the sacrifices, and the royalty literally, we cannot reconcile all these passages. † They are then, necessarily, nothing more than figures. † But for this, we could not even reconcile passages from the same writer, or from the same book, or sometimes from the same chapter,—all which express perfectly the meaning of the author; as when Ezekiel, ch. xx., says, "They shall live in the commandments of God;" and, again, "they shall not live in them."

XXIII. † *Figures.*

When the word of God, which is perfect truth, is untrue in a literal sense, it is true spiritually. "*Sede a dextris meis.*" This is false literally, but spiritually it is true.

In these expressions God is spoken of after the manner of men; and nothing more is intended than that, in placing another person at the right hand, God designs the same thing as men. It is an indication of the intention of the Almighty, not of his manner of executing that intention.

So, when it is said, "God smelled a sweet perfume from your sacrifices, and will recompense you with a fruitful land," the meaning is the same as that of a man who, if pleased with a perfume, would, in like manner, testify his satisfaction. God thus rewards you, because you have the same wish to give him pleasure, as a man who offers sweet perfume to his fellow-man.

† Thus, also, when we read, "*iratus est,*" God is jealous, &c.: these things being indescribable as regards God, cannot be otherwise expressed; and the church, in like manner, now says, "*Quia confortavit seras,*" &c.

— † It is not allowable to attribute to Scripture, meanings which are not revealed to us. Thus, that the ם of Isaiah signifies six hundred years, is not matter of revelation. It should have been said that the ץ and the ן "*deficientes,*" signified mysteries. It is not permitted to say this; and still less that it is undiscoverable, like the philosopher's stone. But we affirm that the literal is not the real meaning, because the prophets have said the same things themselves.

XXIV. + "*Fac secundum exemplar quod tibi ostensum est in monte.*"

The Jewish religion, then, has been formed in a resemblance to the truth of the Messiah; and the truth of the Messiah has been recognized by the religion of the Jews, of which it was the type.

In the Jewish economy truth was veiled under figures.

In heaven it is unveiled.

In the church it is covered, and recognized by its agreement with the figure.

— The figure has been framed upon truth, and truth is recognized in the figure.

— + St. Paul says, that certain persons will forbid marriage; and he himself speaks of it to the Corinthians . . . . . *

XXV. The Old Testament contained types of the happiness to come; and the New, the means of attaining to it. The types were those of joyousness, the means were repentance; and yet the paschal lamb was eaten with bitter herbs, "*cum amaritudinibus.*"

XXVI. + *Figures.*

+ God made use of the sensual tendencies of the Jews to subserve the cause of Jesus Christ.

XXVII. + *Figures.*

+ Nothing bears so much external resemblance to

* Here follow five or six illegible words. In the copy it stands, "*d'une manière qui est une ratière.*"

religion, as worldliness; and nothing is so opposed.* Thus the Jews, full of enjoyments which ministered to their cupidity, resembled Christians, yet were very different from them. And in this way they possessed two qualities which it was requisite they should possess;—to be very much disposed towards the Messiah, in order to hold him forth in figures; and yet to be utterly opposed to him, that they might be unsuspected witnesses.

XXVIII. † The figures which indicate the universality of redemption,—such as the sun shining upon all men,—show nothing more than a universality; but the figures denoting exclusion,—such as the Jews elected, to the exclusion of the Gentiles,—show simply exclusion. † Christ is the Redeemer of all men. True: for he has offered redemption to all, in the same way as a person who ransoms all that are willing to come to him. Those who perish, do so by their own perverseness; but as to him, he has offered them ransom. This is well as an illustration, where he who ransoms, and he who saves from death, are distinct; but not as regards Jesus Christ, who does both the one and the other.

XXIX. † And yet this covenant, blinding some and enlightening others, revealed clearly to those even whom it blinded, that truth which the other class had themselves discovered in it. For the external benefits which they received at the hand of God, were so mighty and of so

* Orig.: "*Rien n'est si semblable à la charité que la cupidité, et rien n'y est si contraire.*"

divine a character, that they proved his power to bestow those which were invisible; and—most of all—a Messiah.

+ Nature is a type of grace; and visible wonders are figures of the invisible. "*Ut sciatis, tibi dico surge.*"

+ Isaiah li.* says, that the Red Sea is the type of redemption.

+ God has thus demonstrated, in the deliverance from Egypt, the passage of the Red Sea, the defeat of the Kings, the manna,—in every part of the history of the race of Abraham,—that he had power to save, to give food from heaven, &c.; and, in the same way, the perverseness of the people prefigured their rejection of Messiah, &c.

+ He has herein taught us, that all these things were only figures; and shown wherein consists the true liberty, the true Israelite, true circumcision, true bread from heaven, &c.

— In these promises every one finds that which in his heart he most affects,—whether temporal good, or spiritual blessings; God, or the creature. But it is with this difference; that those who seek therein for the creature, find it, although mixed up with various contradictions, —with the command not to set the affections upon it, and to adore and love God alone, which is the same thing; and, finally, with the intimation that no Messiah has been given for them. Whereas, those who seek God in these revelations find him, and that without any contrarieties; together with invitations to devote themselves to his love; and the assurance that the Messiah has appeared, in the fulness of time, to bestow upon

* 10 and 11.

them those rich benefits which had been the object of their supplications.

— And thus the Jews also had their miracles, their prophecies, which they saw fulfilled before their eyes; and the great doctrine of their law, to worship and love one God alone. These things were of perpetual obligation; and exhibited to them all the marks of a true religion. We must, however, distinguish the doctrine of the Jews from the doctrine of their law. The doctrine of the Jews was wanting in truth, although it was accompanied by miracles and prophecies, and extended into perpetuity,—because it failed in that other great condition, that of adoring and loving God alone.

XXX. † The development of all these mysteries was made solely to the Jews, and by the preaching of St. John, the forerunner of the Messiah; and afterwards the remaining mysteries, to indicate that the same order should be observed in each individual, as in the world at large.

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† Figures varied on account of our infirmities.*

XXXI. † *Perplexities of Scripture.*

† The Jews say, "Scripture declares that it will not be known whence Christ comes."

John vii. 27, and xii. 34.

† Scripture says, that Christ abides for ever, and yet that he shall die. "Thus," says St. John, "although they saw so many miracles, they believed not, that the saying of Isaiah might be fulfilled,—They were blinded," &c.

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* In the copy only.

XXXII. In reality, there is enough of clearness to enlighten the righteous, and enough of obscurity to humble them. There is sufficient obscurity to perplex the impenitent, and sufficient clearness to convict them without excuse.

(*In the margin:* † St. Augustin, Montagne, Sebonde.)

— The genealogy of Jesus Christ in the Old Testament, is mixed up with so many other insignificant personages, as to be with difficulty distinguished. Had Moses only recorded the immediate ancestors of Christ, then the genealogy would have been too obvious: if he had not recorded those of the Saviour, it would not have been distinguishable. But, after all, a careful observer will easily discern that of Christ, through Tamar, Ruth, &c.

— † Those who directed the observance of sacrifices, well knew their inutility; and those who declared their inutility were, nevertheless, not the less punctual in their observance.

— † If God had suffered only one religion to prevail, it would have been too palpable. But if the different varieties of belief are carefully examined, truth will be easily discernible amidst the conflicting systems.

— This is a principle: Moses was a very able man: if, then, his conduct was governed by intelligence, he would clearly have said nothing that was directly inconsistent with intelligence.

So, all the apparent weaknesses are in reality evidences of strength. For instance, the two genealogies of St. Matthew and St. Luke: what can be clearer than that there is no concert between them?

The truth of religion may be seen even in its obscurity, in the small measure of insight which we obtain into its mysteries, and in our indifference to become acquainted with them.

Had there been but one system of religion, God would have been too clearly revealed; equally would this have been the case, if there had been no martyrs but for our faith.

XXXIII. Neither prophecies, nor even miracles, and the evidences of our religion, are of such a nature that they can be pronounced absolutely convincing. But they are sufficiently so to render it impossible to maintain a belief in them to be irrational. Thus there is at once clearness and obscurity; some are convinced, and some perplexed. Yet is the evidence in favour of the truth so strong, that it surpasses, or at least equals, that against it: thus it is not in the power of reason to decide against its pretensions; but it is the mere effect of a sensual and depraved heart. In the same way, there is sufficient evidence to condemn the unbeliever, but not to convince him; that adherence to the truth may appear the effect of grace, and opposition to it of sense; but neither the one nor the other attributable to reason.

— "*Verè discipuli, verè Israelita, verè liberi, verè cibus.*"

XXXIV. † Religious belief ought to be sincere:— true pagans, true Jews, true Christians.*

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* Orig.: "*Pour les religions, il faut être sincère: vrais païens, vrais juifs, vrais chrétiens.*" (In the copy only.)

XXXV. † *Order. Against the objection that Scripture is deficient in order.*

The affections have an order of their own: the understanding has its own also, consisting in principles and demonstrations; that of the heart is a different thing. We do not set about to prove that we ought to be the object of love, by a methodical disquisition upon its causes: this would be simply ridiculous.

— Jesus Christ and St. Paul dealt with the affections, not with the mere understanding: they aimed to melt the heart, rather than to convince the intellect. It was the same with St. Augustin. Their method consisted chiefly in bringing every point to bear—even in the way of digression and illustration—upon their one great end and aim.

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† Extravagance of the Apocalyptics, Preadamites, Millenarians, &c.

† Any one wishing to fix extravagant statements upon Scripture, may found them, for example, upon the following:—

† It is said, "This generation shall not pass away till all be fulfilled." * Hereon I might say, that after that generation another followed, and others successively.

* St. Matthew xxiv. 34.

CHAPTER VII.

ON PROPHECY.

EDITORIAL NOTICE.

In the discourse which Pascal addressed to his friends, for the purpose of describing the plan of his projected "Apology for Religion," after speaking of the Jewish people, of Moses, of Miracles, and of the Old Testament types, "he went on," says Stephen Perier, "to deduce the proof of the Christian Religion from Prophecies; and on this head he enlarged more than on any of the preceding. Having meditated much upon this subject, and entertaining respecting it some views wholly original, he unfolded them with much explicitness. He showed the meaning and connexion of the several predictions with surprising facility, and laid them open to view in all their clearness and force."

The numerous fragments—and those for the greater part heretofore unpublished—now collected in the following chapter, testify strongly, indeed, to the care with which Pascal had studied the Hebrew Prophets. The profound study, however, devoted to such subjects, indicates a taste eminently mystical; and these his lucubrations upon prophecy are not the only portions of his writings in which this tendency of mind is evinced. In other parts of this work, and especially in the chapter on "Jesus Christ," there will be found many pages hitherto unpublished, which attest that, while their author must occupy one of the highest places in the ranks of philosophy, a prominent one must be assigned to him in those of the Mystics also. (*French Editor.*)

ON PROPHECY.

I. † *H.* 5.

* Contemplating the blindness and the misery of man; looking out also upon this silent universe; and seeing man powerless, dark, without guidance, cast upon a mere point on its surface,—unknowing who has placed him there, what are the purposes of his existence, what his destiny, or its termination;—destitute, in short, of all knowledge, I shrink in terror from myself, like one † who has been cast sleeping upon a desert land, and wakes, unconscious where he is, or how he can make his escape from it. I begin to marvel how any should be preserved from despair in so hopeless a condition! I see around me others possessing natures like my own. I ask them, if they are better informed than myself: they answer, "No;" and straightway—unhappy wanderers!—they look around them, find certain objects which they think can give them satisfaction, attach themselves to those objects, —become absorbed in them. But I,—I cannot attach myself to such things; and, seeing how delusive and unreal is everything around me, I have applied myself to discover whether the Creator has not furnished some marks by which he can be traced.

* This striking passage is quoted, with some variations, in the Preliminary Essay of M. Villemain to the Provincial Letters, p. 43. (Transl.)

† "*Comme un homme;*" at first this stood, "*Comme un* enfant."

I see many opposing religions; and yet all of them false, excepting ONE. Each of them asserts its right to be received on its own authority, and fulminates threats against the unbelieving. I do not, however, believe them the more for these pretensions: all may make such; all may claim the gift of prophetical inspiration. But, under the Christian religion, I find actual prophecy; and I find it in no other.

II. Prophecy constitutes the largest part of the evidence of Jesus Christ. It is the chief purpose for which God has provided it: for the event in which it mainly centred, has constituted a standing miracle from the commencement of the church, and will continue such to its closing period. During a series of sixteen hundred years, therefore, there was a succession of prophets raised up; and in the four centuries that succeeded, their predictions were dispersed abroad, together with the Jewish people who were their depositaries, throughout all the nations of the earth. This, then, formed the preparation for the advent of Jesus Christ: for, it being the Divine intention that his Gospel should be received throughout the world, it was necessary, not only that prophecy should lead the way to its reception, but that those prophecies should be dispersed as universally, as the principles of Christianity were, eventually, to be taught and received.

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† It was not then sufficient that prophecies should exist; they were to be scattered throughout all lands,

and preserved in all periods. And, lest this should be deemed a matter of mere chance, this very fact was itself to be the subject of prediction.

— It contributed yet more to the glory of Messiah, that they should be the spectators, and actually the instruments of his glory, besides that God . . . .*

III. † *Prophecies.*

Had a single person composed a series of predictions relating to Jesus Christ, both as to the time and manner of his coming, and had his appearance been conformable to those prophecies, it would have been an inconceivable wonder.

But we have, in Scripture, actually much more than this. We find a succession of persons, during a period of four thousand years, one after the other, predicting constantly, and without variation or discrepancy, this one and the same event. It is a fact announced by an entire people, subsisting during this mighty period, for the purpose of embodying their faith in its reality, and never once diverted from their testimony by any menaces or persecutions to which it exposed them. All this is yet more wonderful!

IV. † . . . . † that then they shall no more teach their neighbour, saying, Know the Lord; for they shall all know him. ‡

— Your sons shall prophesy.§

* Here are some illegible words.

† The beginning is wanting in the MS. ‡ Heb. viii. 11.

§ Joel ii. 28.

— I will put my Spirit and my fear into your heart. All this is the same.

To prophesy, is to speak of divine things, not by external proofs, but by an inward and immediate inspiration.*

V. † The everlasting reign of David's race, 2 Chron., declared in all the prophets, and even with an oath. And this not fulfilled in a temporal sense, Jer. xxxiii. 20.

VI. † It might have been thought, that when the prophets predicted that the sceptre should not depart from Judah, until it merged in an eternal sovereignty, this was only intended to flatter the people, and would, therefore, have appeared a mere fallacy to Herod. But, to prove that this was not so, and that, on the contrary, they well knew the temporal dominion was to cease, they announced that the nation should be for a long period without a King or prince. Hosea.

VII. † *Prophecies.*

The 70 weeks of Daniel, are, from the terms used, liable to some doubt as to the period of their commencement, as well as in regard to their termination, on account of differences in chronology. But the whole difference amounts to no more than about 200 years.†

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* "*Par sentiment intérieur et immédiat.*"

† Chronologists agree also that the 70 weeks can only be computed to commence in the reign of Artaxerxes Longemanus; but some date them

VIII. † *Proof.*

† Prophecy with its accomplishment.

That which preceded Christ, and that which followed him.

IX. † Moses taught first: the Trinity, original sin, the Messiah.

— † David. His testimony important.

A King, good, placable, of a gracious disposition, high intelligence, powerful: he predicts, and his wonders are fulfilled:—all this is infinitely surprising.

— † He had only, if his vanity had induced him to do so, to announce himself as the Messiah; for the predictions are clearer as to him than as to Christ himself.

— † And St. John the same.

X. † Can we do otherwise than venerate a man who predicts plainly events which come to pass; who declares his intention to be both to baffle and to illuminate the mind; and who mingles obscurity with clearness, in events which are afterwards fulfilled?

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from the permission given to Esdras by that Prince, in the seventh year of his reign; and others from that to Nehemiah, in his twentieth year. The one class reckon these years from the association of this Prince with himself by his father, Xerxes, about the year 474 before the Christian era, as commonly computed, in which case the seventh year would fall in 467, which is the year of Xerxes' death: the others compute it from the death of Xerxes, so that the twentieth year would fall in 447; which gives precisely the interval of twenty years, namely, between 467 and 447. There is reason, therefore, to suppose that the author here referred to these 20 *years*, and that the copyist, adding a cypher, has brought the number erroneously up to 200 *years*.—Extract from a note to the Edition of 1783.

XI. † *Prophecies.*

† The overthrow of the Egyptians, Is. xix. 9.

† In Egypt an altar to the true God.

XII. † The synagogue has preceded the church; the Jews, Christians; prophecy has predicted Christianity, St. John, the Messiah.

XIII. † *Prophecy.*

† The sceptre was not interrupted by the Babylonish captivity, because the restoration was promised and foretold.

† *Prophecy.*

† The great Pan is dead.*

XIV. The period of the first advent is predicted; that of the second is not, because the first was to be obscure: the second was to be so overt and manifest, that enemies even must recognise it. But as he was to come with obscurity, and in order to be acknowledged of those who searched the Scripture . . . . . †

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† *Susceperunt verbum cum omni aviditate, scrutantes scripturas, si ità se haberent.*‡

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* In the copy only.

† This passage is unfinished in the MS. The Edition of 1670, and those that follow, have the following addition:—". . . . God had so ordered all things, that they served for his recognition. The Jews bore testimony in receiving him, for they were the depositaries of the prophecies; and they testified also in not receiving him, for therein they fulfilled the prophecies."

‡ Acts xvii. 11.

XV. † *Prophecies.*

† That Christ shall sit on the right hand, while God shall make his enemies subject to him.

† Then he shall not subject them himself.

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† That he should be King of the Jews and the Gentiles. And yet, we behold this King of the Jews and the Gentiles oppressed by both, who conspired together for his death: ruling over both; and destroying equally the dispensation of Moses in Jerusalem, which was its focus, and where he founded his first church,—and the heathen idolatry in Rome, which was its stronghold, and which became afterwards his most eminent church.

That he should teach men a right way.

And never did there appear, either before or after him, one who taught divine things in a manner approaching to him.

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† That Jesus Christ would be obscure at his outset, and increase during his progress.

† The little stone of Daniel.

— † If I had not in any way heard of the Messiah, I should, nevertheless, after seeing fulfilled so many wonderful predictions in regard to the government of the world, recognise therein a Divine hand. And if I knew that the inspired volume foretold a Messiah, I should then be convinced that he was come; and still more would my conviction be strengthened, when I found

that the time of his appearance was to be previous to the destruction of the second temple.

XVI. * And that which crowns all, is prophecy; inasmuch as it precludes all imputation of chance in the accomplishment of events.

* Who is there that, knowing his existence was but for a week, would not decide for the belief that it was by no blind chance? . . . .

* Now if passion did not mislead us, a week and a century are the same thing.

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* If we ought to devote aright a single week of existence, we ought equally to do so in regard to a century. †

XVII. * *Prophecy.*

The time predicted in respect of the state of the Jewish people, the state of Paganism, the state of the Temple, the number of years.

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* There must have been great boldness in predicting the same thing in so many different ways.

It was necessary that the four idolatrous or Pagan monarchies, the termination of the Jewish kingdom, and the fulfilment of the seventy weeks, should all come to pass at the same period; and the whole previous to the destruction of the second Temple.

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* Unfinished. † See Miscellaneous Thoughts, 172.

XVIII. † *Predictions.*

That in the epoch of the fourth monarchy, before the destruction of the second temple, and the termination of the Jewish kingdom, in the seventieth week of Daniel, the heathen should be converted, and brought to the knowledge of the God whom the Jews worshipped; that those who turned to Him should be delivered from their enemies, and filled with his fear and love.

And so it fell out, that in the fourth monarchy, previous to the destruction of the second temple, &c., the heathen were brought in crowds to the worship of God, and converted to holiness of life. Their daughters devoted their lives to religion, and renounced the marriage tie; men abandoned all their former pleasures. What Plato could only enforce upon a few select and enlightened followers, a secret impulse, operating by means of a few and simple words, was now accomplished in hundreds of thousands of beings, heretofore ignorant and depraved.

† The rich forsook their possessions; children quitted the tender homes of their parents, to plunge into the austerities of the desert. Whence came all this? It was what had been predicted centuries before. For 2,000 years previous to this, no heathen had ever been known to become a worshipper of the God of the Jews; and in the time predicted, countless multitudes are found adoring the true and only God. The temples are destroyed; their kings embrace the cross! Whence again are these things? It is the Spirit of God now diffused upon the face of the earth.

(*In the margin:* † No heathen, from Moses to Jesus

Christ, according to the Rabbins themselves. After Christ, multitudes of pagans believe the books of Moses, and observe essentially their instructions,—only rejecting their useless parts.)

XIX. † *Holiness.*

"*Effundam spiritum meum.*" * All the earth was full of infidelity and lust; all were seen at once burning with zeal and love: princes renouncing their grandeurs; women courting martyrdom. Whence was this holy compulsion? It was because the Messiah was come. Behold the proof, and the effects of his coming!

XX. † At the coming of Messiah, men were divided. The spiritual hailed his advent; the carnal became his witnesses.

XXI. † *During the continuance of Messiah.*

† "*Ænigmatis,*" Ezek. xvii.

His forerunner, Malachi iii.

A child shall be born, Is. ix.

Born in the town of Bethlehem, Micah v.

He shall be found chiefly in Jerusalem, and spring from the house of Judah,† and lineage of David.

— He will confound the wise and learned, Is. vi. viii. xxix.; and preach the gospel to the poor and humble, Is. xxix.; to open the eyes of the blind, give health to the sick, and light to those who sit in darkness, Is. lxi.

* Joel ii. 28.

† Gen. xlix. 8; *et seq.*

— He is to teach a right way, and be the instructer of the Gentiles, Is. lv., xl., i., vii.

[+] The prophecies were to be unintelligible to the wicked, Dan. xii., Hos. xiv.; but plain to the well-instructed.

The prophecies represent him both as abject in condition, and as the ruler of nations, Is. lii., liii.; Zech. ix. 9.

— Those prophecies which indicate the period of his advent, predict him as being both ruler of the Gentiles, and in a state of humiliation. And those which represent him as coming in glory to judgment, assign no period for the event.

— He is to be a sacrifice for the sins of the world, Is. xxxix., liii.

A foundation-stone, and precious, Is. xxviii. 16.

A stone of stumbling and offence, Is. viii. 14.

Jerusalem is to be broken against this stone. The builders will refuse it, Ps. cxviii. 22. God will make it his chief corner-stone.

And this stone is to become a great mountain, and fill the whole earth, Dan. ii.

Thus he is to be rejected, despised, betrayed, sold, Zech. xi. 12; spit upon, beaten, mocked, afflicted in numberless ways, given gall to drink, Ps. lxix.; pierced, Zech. xii. 10; his feet and hands pierced, himself killed, and lots cast for his garments, Ps. xxii.

Then he is to rise again, Ps. xvi. And that on the third day, Hos. vi. 2.

Then he is to ascend to glory, and sit on God's right hand, Ps. cx.

Kings are to contend with him, Ps. ii.

Sitting at the Father's right hand, he is to subdue his enemies.

Kings and nations are to worship him, Is. lx.

The Jews are ever to subsist as a nation, Jerem., &c.

They are to be dispersed, to be without a King, &c., Hos. iii.; without Prophets, Amos; waiting for salvation, but finding it not, Is.

— + The Gentiles called by Jesus Christ. Is. lii. 15, &c., &c.

+ Hos. i. 10. Ye shall be no more my people, and I will be no more your God, after that ye are dispersed and become multiplied again. In the place where it was said, "Ye are not my people," it shall be said unto them, "Ye are the sons of the living God."

XXII. + Herod believed in the Messiah. He had taken the sceptre from Judah; but he was not of Judah. This constituted a considerable sect.

+ So also Barcosba, and others, received by the Jews. And the report then universally prevailing. *Suetonius, Tacitus, Josephus.*

— How was he to be the Messiah, since in him the sceptre was to be eternally given to Judah; and yet on his coming, the sceptre was to be taken from Judah?

— Seeing, they were not to see; and hearing, they were not to understand; therefore, nothing could better fulfil the event.

— + The malediction of the Grecians against those who compute future periods.

XXIV. It was the design of God, in ordaining that the predictions of the Messiah should be of this nature, that the good and docile should recognise him, but the evil-disposed reject him. Had they been clearer, there could have been in them no obscurity, even for the sceptical. If the period of his coming had been obscurely foretold, the faithful even would have been in doubt; for their ingenuousness of disposition would not, for instance, have led them to understand that ם should mean six hundred years.* But the time has been clearly predicted, and the manner only figuratively.

By this means, the unbelieving, taking the promised blessings for material good, fall into delusion, notwithstanding the time has been clearly predicted; but the believing are preserved from error.

For the proper understanding of the promised good depends upon the affections, which conceive aright of the things they love; but it is otherwise with respect to the times predicted. Thus, the clear fore-showing of the period, and the obscurity respecting the nature of the blessings themselves, have the effect of deceiving the sinful and worldly alone.

What is the testimony of the Prophets to Jesus Christ?—that he shall be the manifest God? No; but that he shall be a God "that hideth himself;" that he shall be misapprehended, that he shall be misbelieved; that he shall be a stone of stumbling, &c.

* The *Mem final*, thirteenth letter of the Hebrew alphabet. The writer here alludes to the circumstance that, in Greek, all the letters have their numeral value, and do the office of cyphers. (Note of the former Editor.)

Let us not then be reproached with the want of clearness in the testimony: we avow it.

Had Jesus Christ come into the world only to sanctify us, the Scripture and all other things would have tended to this point, and it would have been easy to convince the infidel. Had he come only to perplex the world, all his conduct would have been incomprehensible, and we should have had no means of enforcing conviction. But as he came "*in sanctificationem et in scandalum*," as Isaiah saith, we are unable to convince the infidel, and he is unable to convince us; but, by the same means, we do convince him, since we say there is no proof furnished by his conduct, either on the one side or the other.

XXVI. † *Daniel* ii.

† All your diviners and sages are unable to furnish the solution of the mystery which you ask of them.

† But there is a God in heaven who is able to do it; and he has, in your dream, revealed those things which shall come to pass in the time to come.

† It is not by my wisdom that I am able to reveal this secret; but that same God has discovered it to me, that I may be enabled to make it manifest to you, O King!

† This was the vision in your dream:—You saw in your dream a great image before you, high in stature, and terrible in form. The head of the image was of gold; the breast and the arms were of silver; the belly and thighs of brass; the legs of iron; and the feet of mingled iron and clay.

† You looked upon the image, and you saw a stone, cut out without hands, strike upon his feet mingled of iron and clay, and break them in pieces.

† Then fell to dust the iron, and the clay, and the brass, and the silver, and the gold, and were scattered to the winds; but the stone which struck the image increased to a great mountain, and filled the whole earth. This was the dream; and behold now the interpretation.

† You, O King, who are greatest among the Kings of the earth; you, to whom God has given a mighty dominion, and made you to be feared of all the people of the earth; you are this image,—you this head of gold, which you have seen.

† Yet another kingdom shall arise after, but inferior to yours; and after that, another of brass, which shall rule over all the earth.

† And the fourth kingdom shall be of iron; and as iron breaks and bruises all things, so shall this kingdom break and bruise all the others.

† And insomuch as you saw the feet and the toes, formed part of clay and part of iron, it is shown that the empire shall be divided, and shall partake of the firmness of iron, and of the weakness of clay.

† But as the iron cannot mix itself completely with the clay, so shall those represented by the iron and the clay not be able to form a durable union, although they shall unite themselves in marriages.

† Now in the days of these kingdoms, shall God set up a kingdom which shall never be destroyed, nor given to another people. It shall disperse and destroy all the other kingdoms; but itself shall be everlasting, as was

shown of that stone, which being cut out without hands from the mountain, fell upon the iron, the clay, the silver, and the gold. This is what God has revealed of things that are to come to pass in the time to come. The dream is true, and the interpretation certain.

† Then Nebuchadnezzar fell on his face, &c., &c.

Daniel viii.

† Daniel having seen the fight between the ram and the he-goat, in which the latter conquered, and had dominion over the earth: and when the great horn was broken, four other horns came out of it towards the four winds of heaven; from one of which came out a little horn which increased towards the south and the east, and towards the land of Israel, and lifted itself up towards the host of heaven, and cast down the stars, treading them under its feet; and at last opposed itself against the Prince of the Host, and caused the daily sacrifice to cease, and cast the sanctuary into desolation.

† All this Daniel saw: and when he asked the interpretation, a voice was heard, saying, "Gabriel, cause him to understand the vision which he has seen." Then Gabriel said to him,

† "The ram which you saw, is the King of the Medes and Persians; and the goat, is the Grecian King; and the great horn between the eyes, is the first King of the monarchy.

† "And forasmuch as when that horn was broken, four other horns came out of its place, four Kings of the same nation shall succeed, but not of equal power.

† "Then when those kingdoms shall decline through

their sinfulness, a King shall spring up, strong and bold, —but his power not derived from himself,—who shall prosper greatly; and he shall bring desolation upon the holy people; and, waxing strong through fraud and skill, shall destroy many, and shall stand up against the Prince of Princes: but yet he shall perish, and that without violence."

Daniel ix. 20.

[+] While I was praying in my heart, and confessing my sins, and those of my people, prostrating myself before my God, behold Gabriel, whom I had seen at the beginning of my vision, touched me at the time of the evening sacrifice, and said unto me, "Daniel, I am come to give you knowledge of things: from the commencement of your prayers, I came to reveal to you the things which you desired to know, because you are a man beloved. Hear, then, my word, and understand the vision. Seventy weeks are appointed and determined upon your people, and your holy city, to finish transgression, and abolish iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness, and to accomplish the vision and the prophecies, and to anoint the holy of holies."

(*In the margin:* After which this people shall be no more your people, nor this city the holy city.

— The time of wrath shall be over, the years of favour shall come for evermore.)

Know then, and understand,—that from the time of the going forth of the command to restore and to rebuild Jerusalem, to Messiah the Prince, shall be 7 weeks and 62 weeks.[a] After the walls shall have been rebuilt in

times of trouble and affliction, and after 62 weeks, Messiah shall be slain, and a people shall come with their prince, which shall destroy the city and the sanctuary, and that with a flood; and the end of that war shall complete the desolation.

(*In the margin:* The Jews are accustomed to make divisions of numbers, and to place the smaller portion foremost: for instance, 7 and 62 make 69: of these 70 then, there will remain the 70th, that is, the 7 years of which mention is afterwards made.

[a] Which will have followed the 7 first. Christ then is to be slain after the 69 weeks, that is, in the last week.)

[+] And one week[b] shall establish the covenant with many; and the half[c] of the week shall suffice to abolish the sacrifice and the oblation, and shall render astonishing the extent of the abomination, which shall spread and remain upon those who shall be astonished unto the consummation.

(*In the margin:* [b] Which is the 70th that remains.

[c] That is, the three years and a half.)

Daniel xi.

[+] The angel said unto Daniel,—

"There shall be[d] three Kings of Persia; and the fourth, who shall come after, shall be greater in riches[e] and in power, and shall stir up all the people against the Grecks.

(*In the margin:* [d] After Cyrus, under whom this takes place.

— Cambises, Smerdis, Darius.

[e] Xerxes.)

But a mighty King[f] shall rise up, whose empire shall be exclusive, and who shall prosper, according to his will, in all his undertakings; but when his kingdom shall be established, it shall perish, and shall be divided into four parts, according to the four winds of heaven,[g] but not to his own descendants; and his successors shall not be equal to him in power, for even his kingdom shall be dispersed among others besides these.[h]

(*In the margin:* [f] Alexander.

[g] As was said before, ch. vii. 6, viii. 8.

[h] These four chief successors.)

[+] And of his successors, he who shall reign towards the south, shall be powerful; but another shall subdue him, and his kingdom shall be great.

(*In the margin:* Egypt; Ptolemy, son of Lagus; Seleucus, King of Syria.

— Appianus says, that he was the most powerful of Alexander's successors.)

[+] And after certain years they shall unite together; and the daughter[i] of the King of the South shall come to the King of the North, to establish a peace between the princes.

(*In the margin:* [i] Berenice, daughter of Ptolemy Philadephia, son of the other Ptolemy; Antiochus Œcus, King of Syria and Asia, nephew of Seleucus Lagidas.)

[+] But neither she, nor her descendants, shall rule long: for both she, and those who sent her, and her children, and her friends, shall be delivered to death.[j]

(*In the margin:* [j] Berenice and her son were killed by Seleucus.)

+ But a branch [k] shall rise up from his roots, who shall come with a powerful army into the territory of the Northern King, where he shall subdue the people, and carry away into Egypt their gods, their princes, their treasures, and all their spoil; and for many years the King of the North shall not be able to resist him.

(*In the margin:* [k] Ptolemeus Evergetes, son of Berenice's father.

Had he not been recalled for home-objects to Egypt, Justin says, he would have entirely spoiled Seleucus.)

+ Then he shall return to his kingdom; but his sons shall be stirred up, and assemble a great force.

(*In the margin:* Seleucus Cerannus, Antiochus Magnus.

— Ptolemeus Philopater against Antiochus Magnus.

— This Ptolemy profaned the temple. Josephus.)

+ And their army shall come and commit great ravages; when the King of the South, being incensed, shall also raise a great army, and give them battle, and overcome them; and his troops shall become insolent, and his own heart shall be lifted up: he shall subdue many thousands, but his conquest shall not endure.

+ For the King of the North shall return with larger forces than at the first, and shall stand up against the Southern King, and even violent and apostate men among his own people shall rise up against him, that the vision may be accomplished, and they shall perish.

(*In the margin:* Antiochus Magnus. The young Ptolemy Epiphanes being on the throne.

— Those who had abandoned their religion, to gain

favour with Evergetes, when he sent his troops to Scopas, for Antiochus shall retake and subdue Scopas.)

[+] And the Northern King shall destroy the fortresses and the strongest cities, and all the forces of the south shall not be able to resist him, but shall submit to his will: he shall encamp upon the land of Israel, and it shall submit to him.

[+] Thus he shall think to make himself master of all the kingdom of Egypt.

(*In the margin:* Despising the youth of Epiphanes, according to Justin.)

[+] And he shall make alliance with him, and give him his daughter.[l] He shall seek to corrupt her, but shall not persist in his design: then he shall engage in other enterprises, and shall endeavour to subdue the Islands,[m] and some of them he shall take.[n]

(*In the margin:* [l] Cleopatra, in order that she might betray her husband. Whereon Appianus says, that, fearing he might not be able to conquer Egypt, through the protection of the Romans, he sought to get possession of it by treachery.

[m] That is, seaports.

[n] According to Appianus.)

[+] But a great chief[o] shall oppose him in the midst of his conquests, and turn his own reproach against him.

[+] He shall return to his own kingdom, and perish,[p] and no more be found.

(*In the margin:* [o] Scipio Africanus, who arrested the progress of Antiochus Magnus, because he had offended the Romans in the person of their allies. — [p] He was killed by his own people.)

[+] And his successor shall be a tyrant,[q] who shall afflict the glory of the kingdom, that is, the people, with imposts; but in a short time he shall die, neither by sedition, nor in war.

(*In the margin:* [q] Seleucus Philopater or Soter, son of Antiochus Magnus.)

And one shall succeed him, vile, and unworthy of royalty, who shall come in by intrigues and flattery.

[+] All the armies shall yield before him, he shall subdue them, and even the prince with whom he had made alliance; for after renewing the alliance with him, he shall betray him, and coming up with small armies into his provinces, undisturbed and free from alarm, he will take the most valuable places, will exceed the deeds of his fathers, and, ravaging in all directions, will form great designs to be executed in his times.*

[+] Is. i. 21. Change from good to evil, and God's retribution.

* — Is. x. 1. *Væ qui condunt leges iniquas.*

Is. xxvi. 20. *Vade populus meus, intra in cubicula tua, claude ostia tua super te, abscondere modicum ad momentum donec pertranseat indignatio.*

— Is. xxviii. 1. *Væ coronæ superbiæ.*

— Miracles.

* The preceding pages contain a commentary, interesting to the students of prophecy, upon several difficult passages in the Book of Daniel. What follow are a series of almost literal transcripts, (interspersed with a few brief remarks,) from other well-known passages in Isaiah and Jeremiah; and they are retained here, in conformity with the French Edition, chiefly for the purpose of exhibiting the strong bias of the writer's mind towards prophetical studies. (Transl.)

— Is. xxxiii. 9. *Luxit et elanguit terra, confusus est Libanus et obsorduit, etc.*

Id. 10. *Nunc consurgam, dixit Dominus, nunc exaltabor, nunc sublevabor.*

— Is. xl. 17. *Omnes gentes quasi non sint.*

— Is. xli. 26. *Quis annuntiavit ab exordio · ut sciamus, et a principio ut dicamus: Justus es?*

Is. xliii. 13. *Operabor et quis avertet illud?*

Jer. xi. 21. *Non prophetabis in nomine Domini, et non morieris in manibus nostris.*

Propterea hæc, dixit Dominus.

Jer. xv. 2. *Quod si dixerint ad te: Quo egrediemur? dicas ad eos; Hæc dicit Dominus: Qui ad mortem ad mortem, et qui ad gladium ad gladium, et qui ad famem ad famem, et qui ad captivitatem ad captivitatem.*

Jer. xvii. 9. *Pravum est cor omnium et inscrutabile: quis cognoscit illud?* (That is, who can know *all* the evil of it; for that it is evil, is known already.) *Ego Dominus scrutans cor, et probans renes.*

Et dixerunt; Venite et cogitemus contra Jeremiam cogitationes, non enim peribit lex a socerdote, neque sermo a propheta.

Jer. xvii. 17. *Non sis tu mihi formidini, tu spes mea in die afflictionum.*

Jer. vii. 14. *Faciam domui huic in qua invocatum est nomen meum, et in qua vos habetis fiduciam, et loco quem dedi vobis; et patribus vestris, sicut feci Silo.*

(*In the margin:* Reliance upon external sacraments.)

Id. 16. *Tu ergo noli orare pro populo hoc.*

Jer. vii. 22. *Quia non sum locutus cum patribus*

vestris, et non præcepi eis in die quâ eduxi eos de terra Ægypti, de verbo holocautomatum et victimarum.

Id. 23. *Sed hoc verbum præcepi eis dicens: Audite vocem meam, et ero vobis Deus; et vos eritis mihi populus, et ambulate in omni via quam mandavi vobis, ut bene sit vobis. Et non audierunt.*

(*In the margin:* The external rite is not the essential point.)

Jer. xi. 13. *Secundum numerum enim civitatum tuarum erant Dei tui Juda, et secundum numerum viarum Hierusalem posuisti aras confusionis: tu ergo noli orare pro populo hoc.*

(*In the margin:* Multitude of doctrines.)

Is. xliv. 20. *Neque dicet: Forte mendacium est in dextera mea?*

Is. xliv. 21, &c. *Memento horum Jacob et Israel, quoniam servus meus es tu. Formavi te, servus meus es tu Israel; ne obliviscaris mei.*

Id. 22. *Delevi ut nubem iniquitates tuas, et quasi nebulam peccata tua: revertere ad me, quoniam redemi te.*

Id. 23, 24. *Laudate cœli quoniam misericordiam fecit Dominus . . .; quoniam redemit Dominus Jacob, et Israel gloriabitur. Hæc dicit Dominus redemptor tuus ex utero: Ego sum Dominus faciens omnia, extendens cœlos solus, stabiliens terram et nullus mecum.*

Is. liv. 8. *In momento indignationis abscondi faciem meam parumper a te, et in misericordia sempiterna misertus sum tui, dixit redemptor tuus Dominus.*

Is. lxiii. 12. *Qui eduxit ad dexteram Moysen brachio majestatis suæ, qui scidit aquas ante eos, ut faceret sibi, nomen sempiternum.*

Id. 14. *Sic adduxisti populum tuum ut faceres tibi nomen gloriæ.*

Id. 16. *Tu enim pater noster, et Abraham nescivit nos, et Israel ignoravit nos.*

Id. 17. *Quare indurasti cor nostrum ne timeremus te.*

Is. lxvi. 17. *Qui sanctificabantur et mundos se putabant . . . .*

Id. 17. *Simul consumentur, dicit Dominus.*

— Jer. ii. 35. *Et dixisti: Absque peccato et innocens ego sum, et propterea avertatur furor tuus a me.*

Ecce ego judicio contendam tecum eo quod dixeris: Non peccavi.

Jer. iv. 22. *Sapientes sunt ut faciant mala, bene et autem facere nescierunt.*

Id. 23, 24, &c. *Aspexi terram, et ecce vacua erat, et nihili; et cœlos, et non erat lux in eis.*

Vidi montes et ecce movebantur; et omnes colles conturbati sunt.

Intuitus sum et non erat homo, et omne volatile cœli recessit. Aspexi, et ecce Carmelus desertus, et omnes urbes ejus desertæ sunt a facie Domini, et a facie iræ furoris ejus.

Hæc enim dicit Dominus: Deserta erit omnis terra, sed tamen consummationem non faciam.

Jer. v. 4, &c. *Ego autem dixi: Forsitan pauperes sunt, et stulti ignorantes viam Domini, judicium Dei sui.*

Ibo ad optimates et loquar eis, ipsi enim cognoverunt viam Domini; et ecce magis hi simul confregerunt jugum, ruperunt vincula. Idcirco percussit eos leo de sylva, pardus vigilans super civitates eorum.

Jer. v. 29. *Numquid super his non visitabo? dicit Dominus: aut super gentem hujuscemodi non ulciscetur anima mea?*

Jer. v. 30. *Stupor et mirabilia facta sunt in terra.*

Id. 31. *Prophetæ prophetabant mendacium, et sacerdotes applaudebant manibus, et populus meus dilexit talia: quid igitur fiet in novissimo ejus?*

Jer. vi. 16, &c. *Hæc dicit Dominus: State super vias et videte, et interrogate de semitis antiquis, quæ sit via bona, et ambulate in ea; et invenietis refrigerium animabus vestris. Et dixerunt: Non ambulabimus.*

Et constitui super vos speculatores. Audite vocem tubæ. Et dixerunt: Non audiemus.

Ideo audite gentes quanta ego faciam eis. Audi terra: ecce ego adducam mala, etc.

Jer. xxiii. 15. *A prophetis enim Hierusalem egressa est pollutio super omnem terram.*

Id. 17. *Dicunt his qui blasphemant me; Locutus est Dominus; Pax erit vobis: et omni qui ambulat in pravitate cordis sui dixerunt; Non veniet super vos malum.*

[+] If it does not show indifference, &c., &c.

. . . . . .

XXVII. [+] General conduct of the world towards the church;—God wishing to enlighten and instruct.

[+] The result having established the inspiration of this portion of the prophecies, the remainder ought to be believed; and by their means we see what is the actual course of the world's affairs.

— † The miraculous procedure of the creation and the deluge having lapsed from memory, God caused the law to be delivered, empowered Moses to perform his miracles, and raised up prophets for particular objects. And, to establish a standing miracle, he ordained both prophecies and their accomplishment. For as mere predictions might be liable to suspicion, he determined to place them beyond suspicion.

XXVIII. † *Particular predictions.*

† They were strangers in Egypt, without possession or inheritance, either there or elsewhere,* when Jacob dying, and blessing his children, announced to them that they should become possessed of an extensive country, and predicted especially that their Kings should be descended from the family of Judah, and that all his brethren should be subject to him.†

† Jacob, disposing of the promised land as its possessor, gave to Joseph a larger portion than to the others. "I give to you," he said, "one portion beyond your brethren;" and blessing his two sons, Ephraim and Manasseh, whom Joseph had brought to him, the eldest, Manasseh, being on his right, and the younger,

* Here follows this passage, erased:—"There was not, then, the least indication either of the royalty which ensued so long after, nor of the Supreme Council of Seventy Judges, called the 'Sanhedrim,' which, instituted by Moses, continued till the time of the Messiah: all these things seemed as unlikely to occur as could be possible . . . ."

† Here follows this passage in the MS., erased:—"That the Messiah even, the expected of all nations, should be born of him, and that the kingdom should not depart from Judah, nor the Governor and Lawgiver from his offspring, till Messiah should come."

Ephraim, on his left, he placed his arms across, and putting his right hand on the head of Ephraim, and his left on that of Manasseh, blessed them both after that manner. On this, Joseph remonstrating with him on thus placing the younger before the elder, he replied with wonderful energy, "I know it, my son; I know it well: but Ephraim shall be above Manasseh." Which superiority was, in the sequel, so plainly manifested, that his one tribe being almost as populous as the ten which composed the whole kingdom, it has been usual to call them all by the name of Ephraim only.

† Joseph also dying, commanded his children to carry his bones with them when they should go up into that land, which they did not enter until after an interval of two hundred years.

† Moses, who described all these things so long before they came to pass, made the division of the land to the several families, as if he had had the disposal of it, long before they entered into it.*

† He appointed arbitrators to carry out the distribution, prescribed forms of political government, directed them to build cities of refuge, and . . . . (Incomplete.)

XXIX. † *Final captivity of the Jews.*

† Jer. xi. 11. I will bring upon Judah all these evils, and they shall not be delivered from them.

* Another passage erased:—"And predicted circumstantially all that was to befall them in the land of which they should take possession after his death:—the victories they should achieve, their ingratitude towards God, the punishments that should be inflicted upon them, &c., &c."

XXX. † *Figures.*

† The Lord planted a vine, from which he looked for grapes, but it produced only sour grapes; therefore I will dig it up and destroy it: the earth shall produce only thorns, and I will forbid the heaven to rain upon it.

Is. v. 7. † The Lord's vine is the house of Israel, and the men of Judah are his pleasant plant: I looked that they should do justice, and they brought forth only iniquity.*

. . . . . .

XXXV. There are some who see clearly that man has no enemy but his lusts, which pervert his way from God, while God desires to keep him near to himself; and that his real happiness consists in God, and not in earthly joys. As to those who think man's good to consist in fleshly enjoyments, and his evil in that which weans him from the pleasures of sense, let them satiate themselves with such things, and die! But for those who seek their God with their whole heart; whose only grief is the privation of his favour, their only desire its possession, their only enemies those who would draw them away from him, and their chief affliction to find themselves surrounded by such foes;—let such as these be comforted: I bring them good tidings; there is a deliverer for them; and it is my office to reveal him. I have to show them that there is a God who is on their side. I care not to display him to others. I will show them a Messiah, who was

* Here follow, in the French Edition, various Scripture quotations, occupying several pages, which it is unnecessary to transcribe. (Transl.)

promised to deliver them from their enemies; and that he came to deliver them from their iniquities, and from no other enemies.

— When David predicted that Messiah would deliver his people from their enemies, it might be supposed, in the view of sense, that the Egyptians were intended; and in that case I should not be able to demonstrate the fulfilment of the prophecy. But let it be allowed that sin is intended,—for, in reality, Egyptians are not enemies, but iniquities are so,—then the term "enemies" must be regarded as equivocal.

But if we find, as is the case in other places, both in Isaiah and in other prophecies, that the promise is to deliver his people from their sins, the ambiguity is removed, and the double meaning of the term "enemies" reduced to the simple one of "iniquities." For if the writer meant to convey the idea of sin, he might well describe it as an enemy; but if it was merely enemies that he intended, he could not describe them as iniquities.

Now Moses, David, and Isaiah, all made use of the same terms. Who then shall say that they did not mean to convey the same idea? and that the meaning of David, when speaking of enemies,—which is evidently that of iniquities,—is not the same as that of Moses, in using the same expression?

— Daniel (9th chap.) prays for deliverance of his people from the bondage of their enemies: but his thoughts were directed to their sins; and in proof of this, he says that Gabriel appeared to him, to tell him that his prayer was heard, and that in seventy weeks it

should be fulfilled; when his people should be delivered from their iniquity,—sin brought to an end,—and the Deliverer, the Holy of holy ones, bring in everlasting righteousness;—not a legal, but an everlasting one.

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† *Prediction.*

It is predicted that at the time of the Messiah a new covenant should be formed, which should supersede the departure from Egypt, (Jerem. xxiii. 5, Is. xliii. 16,) and should establish the law, not externally, but in the heart; that Christ should fix his fear in the heart, not in the external conduct.

† Who does not discern in all this the law of Christianity?

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† *Prophecy.*

That the Jews would reject Jesus Christ, and that they would be rejected by God, inasmuch as the chosen vine would produce only sour grapes. That the chosen people would be infidel, ungrateful, and incredulous: "*Populum non credentem et contradicentem.*"

That God would visit them with blindness, and they would grope as the blind in the noon-day. (Deut. xxviii. 28.)

That then idolatry should be overthrown; that the Messiah should destroy the idols, and restore the worship of the true God.

That the temples of idolatry should be destroyed, and that in all nations and all places animal sacrifices should be done away, and a pure worship restored.

. . . . . .

+ The zeal of the Jews for their law and their temple. Josephus and Philo . . "*ad Caium.*"*

+ What other people ever possessed such zeal? And it was necessary.

+ What a blessing is it, to have so much light in the midst of such obscurity!

It is most interesting to trace with the eye of faith, Cyrus, Alexander, the Roman, Pompey, and Herod, all promoting, without knowing it, the triumphs of the Gospel!

+ Delightful by faith to read the histories of Herod and Cæsar!

The Prophets blended individual transactions with the particulars respecting the Messiah, that the predictions of the Messiah should not be without proof, and the individual prophecies not without fruit.

* An illegible word.

CHAPTER VIII.

ON JESUS CHRIST.

EDITORIAL NOTICE.

After discoursing on the Prophecies, Pascal "entered," says M. Perier, "on the subject of the New Testament. He commenced with Jesus Christ."

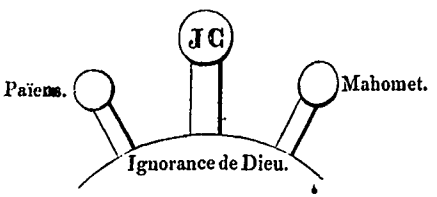
Among the numerous unpublished fragments collected in this chapter, we have furnished that which Pascal entitled "The mystery of Jesus Christ," composed apparently under the influence of a species of melancholy transport, in a continuous series, and almost entirely without erasures: these pages are remarkable for the highly enthusiastic (*mystique*) character impressed upon them. The reader will be especially struck with that passage in which the writer, wrapt in tender contemplation, seems to see Jesus present to his view, converses with him, hears his words, and replies to him: we might seem to be reading a chapter of "The Imitation."*

It may be conjectured that these pages, which are not found in the collection of the "*Pensées*," formed part of the Portfolio, which the Abbé Perier mentions in the following manner, in the 3d Certificate prefixed to the Autograph MS.: — "I, the undersigned, certify that the Portfolios collected in this volume, which are abridgments of the 'Life of Jesus Christ,' are in the handwriting of my uncle, M. Pascal, and were found after his death among his papers; which volume I have deposited in the Library of the Abbey St. Germain des Prez, for custody there, &c." — This part of the MSS. of Pascal, with the exception of the portion preserved in the following pages, is now probably wholly lost.

The original of the diagram placed in front of the following chapter, is drawn by Pascal's own hand, at p. 113 of the autograph MS. (*French Editor.*)

* "*De L'Imitation.*" (A Kempis.)

ON JESUS CHRIST.



I. Jesus Christ is the object of the two Testaments: of the Old, its expectancy; of the New, its model; of both, the centre.

II. Jesus Christ is for all men. — Moses for one people.

The Jews were blessed in Abraham: "I will bless those who bless thee;" but "in thy seed all nations shall be blessed."

"*Parvus est ut*," &c. Isaiah.

"*Lumen ad revelationem gentium.*" Luke ii. 32.

"*Non fecit taliter omni nationi*," said David, (Psalm cxlvii. 20,) in speaking of the law; but in speaking of Jesus Christ, he may say, "*Fecit taliter omni nationi.— Parvus est ut*," &c. Isaiah.

Thus universality is the characteristic of Jesus. The

church herself offers her sacrifices only for the believing: Christ has offered that of his Cross for all.

III. What being was ever so distinguished? The whole Jewish nation predicted his advent. The whole Gentile world afterwards adored him. Both Jew and Gentile regard him as their centre.

And yet who ever evinced less self-complacency in his distinction? During thirty out of the thirty-three years of his existence, he was unknown. Even in those three years, he passed for an impostor: by the priests and rulers he was rejected; by his friends and relatives despised. At last he dies, betrayed by one of his disciples, denied by another, deserted by all!

What was his share, then, in all his distinction? None ever experienced so much; with none was it accompanied by such ignominy. And all was for our sakes; none for his own!

Jesus is that Divine Being to whom we can draw near without pride, and before whom we can be abased without despair.

IV. † Coming after a succession of God's messengers, Christ at last appeared, saying, "Behold me, behold the time come! What the prophets foretold should come to pass in the fulness of time, I announce is about to be fulfilled by my Apostles. The Jews shall be rejected, Jerusalem destroyed, and the Heathen brought to the knowledge of God. All this shall be accomplished by

my Apostles, after you shall have slain the Heir of the Vineyard."

Then the language of the Apostles to the Jews was;—"You are about to incur God's malediction;" and to the Heathen, "You shall acquire the knowledge of God:" and all this came to pass.

(*In the margin:* Celsus ridiculed this.)

V. The knowledge of God, without a knowledge of our own misery, produces pride; that of our misery, without God, leads to despair. The knowledge of Jesus Christ forms the medium by which we acquire the knowledge both of God and of our own misery.

VI. [+] Even had Epictetus perfectly discerned the right way, his language to mankind was only,—"You follow a wrong one." He shows there is another; but he does not lead the way to it. That way is to will what God wills. Jesus Christ alone leads to it: "*Via veritas.*" *

VII. Christ has done no more than teach men that they naturally love themselves; and that they are enslaved, blind, diseased, unhappy, and guilty; that they require to be delivered, enlightened, healed, and made happy: that this is only to be done by leading them to abhor themselves, and following up this lesson by the sufferings and death of the cross.

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* Immediately after this passage, the St. Germain copy adds, "The vices of Zeno even."

VIII. Without Jesus Christ, man must be a creature of vice and misery; with him, he is delivered from both. In him is all our virtue and all our happiness; apart from him is nothing but vice, misery, error, darkness, death, despair.

IX. + Not only is it impossible,—it would be useless, to know God otherwise than through Jesus Christ. We are not repelled, but invited; we are not degraded, but . . . .*

"*Quo quisquam optimus est pessimus, si hoc ipsum quod sit optimus ascribat sibi.*"

X. + *God in Christ.* We know God only by Jesus Christ. Without this Mediator all communication with God is barred: through it, we obtain a knowledge of him. All who have pretended to know and prove the existence of God, without Christ, have failed in the attempt. To Jesus Christ, however, prophecy furnishes a solid and incontrovertible testimony. And those prophecies being fulfilled and proved true by the event, evince the certainty of those truths, and therefore furnish proof of the divinity of Christ. In and by him, then, we acquire the knowledge of God. Without him, without the Scripture, without the doctrine of original sin, without the knowledge of a Mediator, promised and revealed, we have no means of absolutely proving the existence of God, or teaching sound doctrine or holy morals. But in and through Jesus Christ, we prove God's existence, and obtain a system of sound doctrine

* Unfinished.

and wholesome morality. Christ then is, in truth, God manifested to man.

+ By the same means we also learn the evils of our condition; for this God, so revealed, is the effectual repairer of our miseries. Thus we cannot arrive at the true knowledge of God, but through the consciousness of this misery.

+ Those, then, who have acquired a knowledge of God, without a knowledge of their misery, have not used it to promote his glory, but their own exaltation. "*Quia non cognovit per sapientiam, placuit Deo per stultitiam prædicationis salvos facere.*" *

+ We not only cannot attain to the knowledge of God, excepting through Jesus Christ, but we cannot know ourselves. We know nothing of life, nothing of death, but by him. Without him, in short, we know neither life, nor death, nor God, nor ourselves.

+ Thus, without the Scripture, whose only subject is Christ, we know nothing, and are involved in utter obscurity as to the nature of God, and of ourselves.

XI. + "Pray, that you fall not into temptation."† Temptation is dangerous, and those who experience it, do so because they omit to pray.

— + "*Et tu conversus, confirma fratres tuos.*" ‡ But before, it is said, "*conversus Jesus respexit Petrum.*" §

— + St. Peter asks permission to strike Malchus; but

* 1 Cor. i. 21.

† Matt. xxvi. 41:—"*Vigilate et orate ut non intretis in tentationem.*"

‡ Luke xxii. 32. § Luke xxii. 61.

he strikes before he receives a reply: it was afterwards that Christ spoke.

The word "Galilee,"* which the multitude of the Jews altered by mere accident, when accusing Jesus Christ before Pilate, was the cause of his being sent to Herod; whereby was fulfilled the mystery that he should be judged by both Jews and Gentiles. The apparent accident led to the fulfilment of this mystery.

XII. † Christ did not desire to suffer without the forms of justice; for it is much more ignominious to die under judicial forms, than by seditious outbreak.

XIII. † The perverted judicature of Pilate contributed only to hasten the fate of Jesus: he caused him, first to be unjustly scourged, and then to be executed. He had far better have killed him at first. So it is with false professors: they perform both good and evil actions out of a regard merely to the world's opinion, and thus show that they belong not to Christ. They are, in fact, ashamed of him, and, in time of temptation, betray him.

XIV. The object of Christ's coming, then, was to reveal to men that they have no enemy so great as themselves; that it is their own passions which separate them from God; and that he came to subdue those passions, to confer his grace upon men, and to form them into a holy church to himself.

He came also to bring back to this his church, both

* Luke xxiii. 5.

heathens and Jews,—destroying the idols of the one, and the superstitions of the other. Herein he is opposed by man, not only through the natural enmity of the carnal mind, but because it has been predicted, that all the Kings of the earth should unite against his Gospel.*

And, in reality, all the great men of the earth did conspire against it,—philosophers, scholars, Kings. The one wrote it down; the other exposed its professors to obloquy; the last destroyed them. And yet, notwithstanding all these obstacles, we find this weak and humble company resisting all these powers, bringing under their doctrine these Kings, philosophers, scholars, and sages; and destroying idolatry throughout the earth! All this was effected by the same power, through whose foreknowledge it had been predicted.†

XV. Christ did not announce that he was not of Nazareth, nor that he was not the son of Joseph, in order that his enemies might be left in their blindness.

XVI. † *Testimonies to Christ.*

Christ announced the greatest truths with so much simplicity, that they seemed to have been the result of no mental effort; and yet combined an originality and point, which fill us with admiration.

XVII. † *Testimonies to Christ.*

It was not their captivity only, but their continued

* In the margin:—"Proph. *Quare tremuerunt gentes.* — *Reges terræ adversus Christum.*"

† In the copy only.

hope of its termination at the expiration of seventy years. Now they are without hope.

God promised that, though they should be dispersed to the ends of the earth, if they remained faithful to him they should be gathered together again. They remain faithful, and are oppressed.

Had the Jews been all converted by Christ, we should have had only suspected witnesses; and had they been destroyed, we should then have possessed none at all!

The Jews reject him, but not all. The saints receive him, not the carnally-minded. And however this may seem to oppose his glory, it in reality is its consummation. For their only reason, and that which is assigned in all their writings,—the Talmud and Rabbinical works,—is, that Jesus Christ did not subdue the nations to himself with the sword, — "*gladium tuum potentissime*:"* this is all they are able to allege.

Christ was slain, they say; he was conquered; he did not overcome the nations by his power: he endued us not with their spoils; we have acquired none of their wealth. And is this all? This forms, with me, his claim to my devotion. I would share in none of their vain expectations.

It is plain that it is only his spotless life, which has stood in the way of their reception of him; and by this rejection they become unimpeachable witnesses; and,

* Psalm xliv. 4.

what is more, they, by that means, accomplish the fulfilment of the prophecies.

It is wonderful, and deserving of our profound admiration, that we should find the Jewish nation perpetually existing, and ever in a state of suffering: indispensable as a witness to Christ, they subsist for the purpose of furnishing their testimony, and they are miserable because they destroyed him. And, contradictory as it seems, to exist and to be unhappy, yet do they ever exist, in spite of their misery.

When Nebuchadnezzar carried away the people, lest they should think the sceptre had departed from Judah, it was announced to them that their captivity should be for only a short time, and that they should be re-established.

Their Prophets ever comforted them with the assurance that their Sovereigns should be continued to them. But the second overthrow is without promise of restoration, without prophecies, without sovereignty, without consolation, without hope! For the sceptre is taken from them for ever!

XVIII. † *Testimonies to Christ.*

† Why was the Book of Ruth preserved?

† What purpose is served by the history of Tamar?

XIX. † *Testimony to Christ.*

The supposition that the Apostles were deceivers, is

utterly absurd. Let us follow it out: imagine these twelve men assembled together after the death of Christ, contriving a scheme to represent him, falsely, as raised from the dead. The human heart is strangely addicted to levity and change, and warped by hopes and benefits. Let only one out of the number have been dazzled by these attractions; and others of them, again, terrified by imprisonment, tortures, and death; their plot would have been ruined! Follow out this, I say.

The Apostles were deceived, or deceivers: either of these suppositions is full of difficulty; for it is not possible to mistake as to a man's restoration from the dead.

— While Christ was with them, their cause might have been sustained. But afterwards, if he had not appeared to them, who could have set them in action?

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† Hypothesis of the Apostles being deceivers.
— † The time clearly.
— † The manner obscurely.
— † Five proofs of figures.

XX. † *Atheists.*

† What right have they to say, "It is impossible that we should rise again?" Which is the more difficult, To be born, or to be raised from death?—that a thing which was nothing should come into existence, or that, when it has once existed, it should live again? Is it less difficult to *be*, than to return from death into being? Custom

renders the one familiar to us; want of familiarity makes the other appear an impossibility. This is the popular way of judging.

What have they to allege against the resurrection, and against the miraculous conception of the Virgin? Why should it be more difficult to produce a man or an animal, than to reproduce one? If they had never seen one particular species of animal, would they have been able to conjecture that it could not have been brought forth without the association of the two sexes of such an animal?

XXI. How did the Evangelists learn the qualities of a perfectly heroic spirit, so as to transfer them to their portraiture of Jesus Christ? Why have they represented him as yielding in his agonies to human infirmity? Could they not have described a death of unwavering fortitude? Yes, assuredly; for it is the same narrator, St. Luke, who describes the death of St. Stephen, as one of more firmness than that of Christ.

They describe him, then, as yielding to fear, before death had become inevitable, but afterwards, as full of fortitude.

His sorrow is then from within; against the wrongs of man, he is immovable.

XXII. † The Jews, in testing his divinity, proved him to be *man*.

The Church has been as careful to prove him to be man, in contradiction to those who deny his humanity, as to prove his divinity; and of both indeed the indications were palpable.

XXIII. Joseph a type of Christ.

The beloved of his father; sent on an errand by his father to his brethren, &c.: without fault; sold by his brethren for money; and thence exalted to be their lord, their saviour; the saviour of multitudes unknown to him; of the world:—all which could not have taken place without the scheme for his disgrace, his sale, and destruction.

— In the prison, Joseph was committed, without any offence of his, with two criminals; Christ was crucified between two thieves. He foretold the release of the one, and the execution of the other, under like symbols, in the case of each. Jesus saves the elect, (*les élus*,) and condemns the reprobate, (*les réprouvés*,) under like crimes. Joseph predicts only; Christ acts. Joseph entreats of the one who is to be saved that he will be mindful of him when he is restored to prosperity; and he whom Jesus saves prays to be remembered of him when he shall enter his glory.

XXIV. † Why did not Jesus Christ make his appearance on earth in a manner plain and palpable, instead of resting his claims on preceding prophecies?

— † Why was he foreshadowed in figures?

XXV. What could the Jews, his enemies, do? If

they receive him, they authenticate him by their reception, for it is the depositaries of the promise of the Messiah by whom he is received; and if they renounce him, they authenticate him by their renunciation.

XXVI. The Jews, in putting him to death, to declare their rejection of him as Messiah, furnished the most complete proofs of his Messiahship.

And in continuing to disavow him, they have rendered themselves unimpeachable witnesses.

In killing him, in fact, and persisting in denying him, they have fulfilled the prophecies.

XXVII. Christ appeared under such obscurity (as the world esteems it) that historians, recording only important events of worldly policy, took scarcely any cognizance of him.

[+] *On the fact, that neither Josephus, nor Tacitus, nor other historians, make any mention of Christ.*

[+] So far from being unfavourable to his claims, it is in their favour; for it is unquestionable that Christ existed, and that his religion was a matter of public notoriety: they could not therefore have been unacquainted with it; and it is evident that they were silent by design; or that references to it existed in their writings, which have been suppressed or altered.

XXVIII. [+] I regard Jesus as sustaining all the relations of life, in ourselves. I see him a father, in his Father; a brother, in his brethren; poor, in the poor;

rich, in the rich; a teacher and priest, in the priests; a Sovereign, in Sovereigns, &c. For in his glorified condition, as God, he is everything that is great; and in his mortal state,* everything that is abject and base: he assumed, indeed, this low estate, that he might dwell in all, and be the model of every condition.

XXIX. + In asserting that Christ did not die for all, you think to reprove those who rashly apply the exception to themselves; which leads to despair, rather than to encouragement and hope; + for it is in this way that internal virtues are promoted by outward habitudes.†

+ Calling of the Gentiles by Jesus Christ. Is. lii. 15.‡

XXX. + Overthrow of Judaism and idolatry by Christ.

— *Omnes gentes venient et adorabunt eum.*
— *Parum est ut, etc.* Is.
— *Testes iniqui.*
— *Dabit maxillam percussienti.*
— *Dederunt fel in escam.*
— *Postula a me.*
— *Adorabunt eum omnes reges.*

XXXI. + Adam "*forma futuri.*"§ Six days for creating the one, six ages for forming the other; the six days which Moses represents as employed for the creation of Adam, are only a type of the six ages for the formation

* "*Sa vie mortelle.*" This stood at first, "*Sa nature humaine.*"
† 2d Coll. MS. P. Guerrier. ‡ Copy. § Rom. v. 14.

of Jesus Christ and the Church. Had Adam not sinned, and Christ not appeared, there would have been only one covenant, and one epoch in the history of man: the creation would have been represented as final and complete at once.

[+] The six ages,—the six fathers of the six ages; the six marvellous appearances at the commencement of each of the six ages; the six* . . . the entrance upon the six ages.

XXXII. — [+] *Ne timeas pusillus grex, timore et tremore. Quid ergo ne timeas, modo timeas.*

[+] Fear not, if you are afraid; but if not afraid, fear.

— [+] *Qui me recipit non me recipit sed eum qui me misit.*†

— [+] *Nemo scit neque filius.*‡

— [+] I hold that Joshua was the first, and Jesus Christ the last, to bear the name of the people of God.

— [+] *Nubes lucida obumbravit.*

— [+] St. John was to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and Christ puts division between them.

— [+] Property "*in communi et in particulari.*" The semipelagians err in saying "*in communi,*" which is not true except "*in particulari;*" and the Calvinists, in saying "*in particulari,*" which is true "*in communi.*" So it appears to me.

XXXIII. [+] M. de Condran. He says, there is no

* Illegible. † John xiii. 20; Matthew x. 40.
‡ Mark xiii. 32.

point of comparison in the union of the saints with that of the Holy Trinity. Jesus Christ says the contrary.

XXXIV. † It seems to me that Jesus allowed his wounds only to be touched after his resurrection: "*Noli me tangere.*"* We can have fellowship with him only in his sufferings.

— † He permitted communion with him, as man, in the holy supper; as raised from the dead, by his disciples at Emmaus; as ascended to glory, by the whole church.

XXXV. † If Satan had favoured the doctrine which he aimed to destroy, he would have been divided against himself, as said Jesus Christ. If God were to favour the doctrine which destroys the church, he would be divided against himself: "*omne regnum divisum,*"† &c. For Christ opposed the devil and exorcised and destroyed his empire in the heart, in order to establish the rule of God in its place. To this effect he adds: "*In digito Dei, etc., regnum Dei ad vos, etc.*"‡

XXXVI. † John 8. "*Multi crediderunt in eum. Dicebat ergò Jesus: Si manseritis. . . . VERE mei discipuli eritis, et veritas liberabit vos.—Responderunt: Semen Abrahæ sumus, et nemini servimus unquam.*"

— † There is a great difference between disciples and TRUE disciples; they are to be known by the word, the truth shall make them free. For if they reply, they are

* John xx. 17. † Luke xi. 17. ‡ Id. 20.

free, and are not in bondage to the devil, they are disciples indeed, but not *true* disciples.

XXXVII. + "*Omnis Judæa regio et Ierosolimatæ universi, et baptizabantur:*"* because all classes of men came to him.

— + These stones *can* become children of Abraham.†

— The righteous shall not be conscious of their good deeds, nor the wicked of the greatness of their crimes. "Lord, when saw we thee hungry, or athirst?" &c.‡

— Jesus Christ would not receive the witness of devils, nor of those who were not called; but of God, and John the Baptist.

— + Those who know themselves, God will heal and pardon. "*Ne convertantur et sanent eos, et dimittantur eis peccata.*"

Mark iii. §. . . Is.

— + Christ never condemned without hearing the party; He said to Judas, "*Amice, ad quid venisti?*" In like manner to him who had not the wedding garment.

XXXVIII. Christ came that those who see might be blind, and the blind see; to heal the sick, and to leave the healthy to die; to call to repentance and to justify the sinners, and leave the righteous in their sins; to supply the wants of the needy, and to send the rich empty away.

XXXIX. The Evangelists make no mention of the

* Mark i. 5. † Matt. iii. 9. ‡ Matt. xxv. 37.
§ Mark iv. (not iii.) 12: "*Ut videntes videant,*" &c.

virginity of the Mother of Christ till his birth. Everything has reference to him.

XL. The Prophets predicted, but were not the subject of prediction. Afterwards the saints were predicted of, but were not prophets. Jesus Christ was both prophesied of and prophesied.

XLI. The infinite difference between the body and the mind is a figure of the infinitely more infinite* difference between the mind and Divine love: (*des esprits à la charité :*) this is beyond all comprehension.

— All external grandeur is dim to those whose researches are habitually directed to the intellect.

— Largeness of intellect is not discernible by the great, the rich, the eminent in command, or by any who are renowned according to the flesh.

— Eminence of wisdom—which yet is nothing, apart from God—is indiscernible by mere sensualists or wits. These things are altogether different in species.

— Genius of a high order has its own domain,—its distinctions, its greatness, its conquests, its splendours; and has no need of, and no connexion with, carnal distinctions. They are things visible to the mind, not to the eye; and that suffices.

The saints have their sovereignty, their distinctions, their victories, their splendour; and have no need of, and no connexion with, carnal or intellectual distinctions, which neither add to, nor detract anything from them.

* In this anomalous expression the original is followed; "*infiniment plus infinie.*" So in Scripture: "*less than the least;*" "*to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge.*" (Transl.)

They are watched by God and angels, and are unseen of mortal sense and refinement. God is their all-sufficiency.

— Archimedes needed not worldly splendour to obtain our veneration. He did not dazzle the eye with conflicts, but he filled the mind and overwhelmed the spirit with his mighty discoveries.

— Jesus Christ, without worldly possessions or scientific eminence, has his own peculiar sanctity. He promulgated no important discoveries; he aimed at no supremacy; but he was humble, patient, holy,—nay, the holiest of the holy; the conqueror of Satan; altogether without sin. To the internal eye of the heart, to the discernment of true wisdom, how illustrious was the pomp of his appearance, and how unspeakable his greatness!

— Princely as was Archimedes, it would have been useless in him to affect the Prince in his geometrical treatises.

— It would have been useless in Christ, in his reign of holiness, to affect earthly sovereignty: yet his coming was with a greatness all its own.

— It is absurd to make the baseness of Jesus Christ a matter of scandal, as if that baseness was of the same nature as the greatness which he came to establish. Let it be remembered what was the kind of greatness displayed in his life, in his passion, in his obscurity of station, in his death, in the choice of his disciples and their abandonment of him, in his resurrection, in his whole history:— so great was everything, that we shall no longer be scandalized with a baseness, which, after all, was none at all.

— But there are some who can admire nothing but carnal greatness, as if there were none that is intellectual;

and there are others who can admire only intellectual greatness, as if true wisdom were not infinitely above all.

— Everything that is merely physical,—the firmament, the starry heaven, the earth and its royalties,—all is valueless compared with the lowest order of intelligence; for it is that which possesses a knowledge of all these things and of itself also: but mere physical substance knows nothing.

— All physical substances, all the intelligence of man, and everything which they produce, bear no comparison with the least of the things divine:* their region is one infinitely above them.

All bodily substances together could not originate the simplest thought: it is an impossibility: their nature is wholly different.

— All bodily substance, and human intelligences together, could not excite an emotion of real divine love: it is equally an impossibility, for its nature is superhuman.

XLII. † Lust of the flesh, lust of the eyes, pride, &c.†

† There are three orders of things,—the flesh, the mind, the will.

† Those of the flesh,—the rich and powerful: their object is the body.

† The inquisitive and scientific: their object is the mind.

† The wise: their object is justice.

† God ought to be supreme over everything, and everything have reference to him. In the things of the flesh,

* "*Le moindre mouvement de charité.*" † 1 John ii. 16.

sensuality is supreme over everything; in those of the intellect, curiosity; in those of wisdom, pride.

+ Not that men may not be distinguished for their wealth, or their knowledge; but these things are not proper objects of pride: for while we concede to any one eminence for learning, we ought not to omit to show him the unsuitableness of pride. Wisdom may properly inspire a consciousness of superiority; for we cannot allow to any one the possession of wisdom, and censure him for such a sense of superiority: the one is a just consequence of the other. It should always, however, be remembered that God is the only source of wisdom: therefore it is said:—"*qui gloriatur, in Domino glorietur.*"

DIFFERENCE BETWEEN CHRIST AND MAHOMET.

XLIII. + Who bears testimony to Mahomet? Himself. Christ desires that his own testimony should be accounted nothing.

— + The essence of testimony is, that it should be perpetual and universal: it is utterly worthless if unsupported.

Mahomet without authority. His proofs then ought to be very powerful, as they rest upon no support but their own.

What does he then declare? That he must be believed.

When two persons express obscure (or apparently irrational) sentiments,* the one with a hidden meaning,

* "*Sots contes.*" In the St. Germain copy, E. Perier, in place of "*sots contes,*" has overlined it, "*choses qui paraissent basses,*" an alteration which has been since continued.

understood only by the initiated; the other with no more than a single and obvious meaning; if any one not thus initiated hear the two thus discoursing, he will form a like opinion respecting both. But if, in the sequel of their discourse, the one should utter sentiments of superhuman excellence, and the other such as are utterly worthless and sordid, it will be then seen which of the two possesses true intelligence:—the one, showing himself to be incapable of such irrationalities as appeared at first in his expressions, but proving, rather, that there must be in them some hidden excellence; the other, on the contrary, evincing that he is capable of the irrationality, and not of the excellence.

It is not by the obscurer sentiments in Mahomet, and those which carry an air of mysteriousness, that I would have him judged; but by his simpler statements,—his Paradise, and things of that kind. There it is that is seen his absurdity. And thence his obscurities ought not to be taken for depth, inasmuch as what is really simple in him is puerile. It is otherwise with the Scriptures. Admitted that there are obscurities as great as in the writings of Mahomet; yet, on the other hand, the clearer parts are beyond all admiration; and there are in them prophecies which have been most palpably accomplished. There is no parallel between the two. No comparison can be made between two things which resemble each other only in their obscurity, but differ in a degree of clearness, which in the one is so great that it should make us regard even its obscurities with reverence.

Any one could have done what Mahomet did: he performed no miracles, he was the subject of no predictions. No one could have done what Jesus Christ did.

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† *Inconstancy and extravagance.*

† To live by labour, and to reign over the most powerful empire in the world, are two things the most opposite possible: they are united in the person of the Grand Seignor.

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† The Pagan religion is without any foundation.*

The Mahometan religion is founded on the Alcoran and on Mahomet. But was he, who ought to have been the object of the whole world's expectation, ever prophesied of? What is there to distinguish him from any other man pretending to be a prophet? What miracles did he perform? What mysteries did he teach? Where, by his own records even, is his morality, or the good tendency of his system?

The Jewish religion should be regarded differently, as it appears in the records of its holy books, and in the traditions of the people. In the latter, the morality and the entire tendency are ridiculous; but in their sacred writings,† they are admirable. Its foundation also is solid;

* At first, "Without any foundation at the present time. It was formerly alleged that it was supported by oracles. But what are the writings which assert this? Are they entitled to credit by the weight of their authors? have they been preserved so carefully, that we can be certain they have not been interpolated?" (This is erased.)

† In the MS., instead of, as above, "*des livres saints,*" it is, "*leurs saints;*" but the whole passage is written by an inexperienced amanuensis. Further, by the *Saints* of the Old Testament, and among the Jewish people, the Prophets are especially intended.

its records are the most ancient and authentic in the world; and while Mahomet, in order to support his system, has forbidden the reading of its records, Moses, to perpetuate his, directed all the world to read its books.

+ It is the same with every religious system: Christianity is a very different thing in its holy writings, and in the hands of the casuists.

+ So divine is the nature of our religion, that another religion, equally of divine origin, forms only its foundation.

+ *Difference between Jesus Christ and Mahomet.**

Mahomet not the subject of prophecy; Christ predicted.

Mahomet established by bloodshed; Christ by the death of his own followers.

Mahomet suppressing knowledge; the Apostles courting it.

In fine, so utterly opposed are they, that if Mahomet took the usual human methods for success, Christ must be considered to have used the means for failure; and instead of concluding that, because Mahomet succeeded, therefore Jesus Christ must have succeeded also, it should be rather inferred, that as Mahomet's religion succeeded, Christianity should have perished.

* This fragment was written on a paper that was afterwards cut in two: one portion is page 457 in the MS., and the other page 467.

THE MYSTERY OF JESUS.

I.

† JESUS, in his passion, endured torments at the hand of man; but, in his agony, his sufferings arose from the depths of his own spirit: "*turbare semetipsum.*" The infliction was not from a mortal, but from an omnipotent hand; and it required omnipotence to sustain it.

— † Jesus is seen seeking, in his extremity, some consolation from his three most attached disciples; and they were asleep! He prays them to abide,* and watch a little with him; and they neglectfully leave him, feeling so little for him, that they could not refrain an instant from sleep.† Thus was Jesus left alone to sustain the wrath of God.

— † Jesus was left alone upon the bare ground, which knows and feels and shares his grief: heaven and earth only are acquainted with it.

— † Jesus was in a garden; not, like the first Adam,

* "*Soutenir.*" Perhaps Pascal intended, "*Se tenir.*" In St. Mark, it stands, "*Et ait illis: Tristis est anima mea usque ad mortem;* sustinete *hic et vigilate.*" — Saci translates "*sustinete hic,*" by "*demeurez ici.*" (French Editor.)

† Pascal here, in common with many other commentators, treats the conduct of the disciples as the effect of negligence, and consequently as severely culpable. But our Lord himself seems to have taken a more indulgent view of their infirmity; he graciously says, "The spirit truly is ready, but the *flesh* is weak." (Transl.)

in one of beauty and enjoyment, where he caused the ruin of the whole human race; but in one of sorrow, where he effected the restoration and salvation of man.

— † This suffering and desertion were sustained amidst the horrors of night and darkness.

— † Jesus never, I believe, uttered a complaint except on this occasion; but then he bewailed himself, as unable to contain his bitter grief: "My soul is exceedingly sorrowful, even unto death!"

— † Christ then sought companionship and consolation on the part of man. This, also, seems to me to be the only occasion when he did so. Yet he received none; for his disciples slept.

— † Jesus will continue to agonize and watch to the end of the world.

— † Jesus, in the midst of this universal abandonment, and the desertion of his friends—brought for the very purpose of watching with him,—finding them asleep, grieves on account of the peril to which they were exposing, not him, but themselves; and, in the face of their ingratitude, takes precautions for their safety and welfare, with the most cordial tenderness.

— † Jesus, finding them still asleep, without consideration for themselves or their Master, gently refrains from disturbing them; and leaves them in their slumber.

— † While uncertain what might be his Father's will, he prays, and shrinks from death; but when he knows His will, he offers himself to death: "*Eamus. Processit.*" (Joannes.)

— † He made his prayer to men, but was not heeded of them.

— + While his disciples slept, he was labouring for their safety. — He does the same on behalf of the justified, while they sleep, and before their mortal existence commences; and for sinners, after their existence has commenced.

— + He prays only once, and that with submission to the Father's will, that the cup may pass from him; but twice, that not his will, but the Father's, may be done.

— + Jesus, in sorrow of spirit, seeing all his followers slumbering, and his enemies wakeful, betakes himself unreservedly to his Father.

— + Contemplating in Judas not his malice, but the appointment of God, the object of his supreme love . . he accosts him under the name of "friend."†

— + Jesus, on entering upon his agony, separates himself from his disciples: in imitation of him, we should separate ourselves from those most near and dear to us.

— + In agony and suffering he prayed yet more earnestly.

II.

+ We implore the mercy of God, not that we may be left in our sins, but that we may be delivered from them.

— + If God has himself laid commands upon us, how carefully ought we to obey them! Necessity, and the course of events, constitute these, and they are infallible.

— + Be comforted: thou wouldst not have sought me, if I had never been found of thee.‡

* A word illegible.

† Matt. xxvi. 50: "*Dixitque illi Jesus: Amice, ad quid venisti?*"

‡ This passage is found, in almost the same terms, in the Miscellaneous Thoughts. (Miscell. Writings, p. 247, clxxx.)

— + My thoughts were of thee in my agony: for thee were those bleeding drops poured forth.

— + It is rather to prove myself, than to make trial of thee, that I consider whether, when absent, thou wilt do these things: if it so come to pass, it is I that do them.

— + Leave thyself to my direction: see how I guided the saints who gave themselves up to my discipline.

— + The Father regards all that I do with complacency.

— + Wouldst thou cost me even my very heart's blood, and hast thou no tears for me?

— + Conversion is mine; fear not, and pray, confiding in me.

— + I am present, by my Word, in Scripture; by my Spirit, in the church; by my influences and power, in the priesthood; by prayer, in the faithful.

— + Physicians cannot heal thee: thou must die at the last. But it is I who renovate the body, and endue it with immortality.

— + Thou must bear with bodily servitude and bondage: I deliver now only from that which is spiritual.

— + I am more a friend to thee than thy earthly associates; I have done more for thee than they; and they would not suffer for thee as I have done; nor would they have died for thee in the midst of thy infidelity and crimes, as I did, and as I am ready to do, and have done, for all my elect.

— + If you were acquainted with your sinfulness, you would be hopeless on account of it.*—Lord, I am

* It will be obvious to the reader that, after the foregoing series of apostrophes on the part of the Saviour, a kind of interlocution is then supposed to take place between Him and a disciple. (Transl.)

hopeless, for, on thy assurance, I believe it in all its aggravation.—Not so, for I, while I make you acquainted with it, am able to heal you; and what I now say is a proof that I am willing to do it. In proportion to your sorrow for sin, will be your conviction of its evil; and it will be said to you, "See how many are the sins which are forgiven you."

† Be humbled under a sense of your unknown sins, and of the hidden malignity in those with which you are acquainted.

— † Lord, I give thee all!

— † I love thee better than thou ever lovedst thy sins.

— † Be mine the glory and not thine, earth and worm of the dust as thou art!

— † Seek to a wise instructor, if my words become to thee a source of evil, vanity, or curiosity.

*— † I see the abyss of pride, curiosity, and sensuality, into which I have fallen. There is, properly, no tie existing between myself, and God, and Christ. But he has been made sin for me: all my stains have fallen upon him. He is become viler than I; and, instead of abhorring me, he deems himself honoured by my coming to him for succour!

† Holy himself, he is the better able to sanctify me.

† He adds my wounds to his own; and, by virtue of this union, in his salvation I am saved.

† Yet must they not be augmented afterwards.

— † "*Eritis sicut dii, scientes bonum et malum.*"

* At this part the disciple addressed, seems to be described as relapsing into self-communion and meditation. (Transl.)

Every one constitutes himself a God in passing judgment,—determining things to be good or evil, as the case may be,—and is either too much afflicted or elated by the course of events.

† We elevate trifles into greatness through the majesty of Christ, who is himself the source of them, and who lives in our life; and we depress great things into little and easy ones, through his omnipotence.

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† Be comforted: you ought to expect nothing from yourselves; then, expecting nothing, you may expect everything.

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† *Burial of Jesus Christ.*

† Christ died visibly on the cross. Being dead, he was hidden in the grave.

† Christ was interred by no hands but those of Saints.

† He performed no miracle in the sepulchre.

† Saints alone entered his tomb.

† It was there, and not upon the cross, that he acquired a new life.

† This was the final mystery of his passion, and of man's redemption.

† Jesus found no place of rest on the earth, but only in the grave.

† It was there only that his enemies ceased to persecute him.

* Genesis iii. 5.

CHAPTER IX.

ON THE CHRISTIAN RELIGION.

EDITORIAL NOTICE.

In this chapter, which forms a natural sequel to the preceding, are collected all the passages of Pascal's writings, the object of which was to unfold the spirit, doctrine, and morality of Christianity; to collect the proof of its authenticity, and explain the means of its establishment.

These reflections closed the discourse in which he developed to his listening friends the plan of his "Apology for Religion." (*French Editor.*)

ON THE CHRISTIAN RELIGION.

I. † SUBJECTION and discipline of the reason, in which true Christianity subsists.

The highest achievement of reason is, to acknowledge that there is an infinity of things which surpass its powers. It is but feeble, as long as it comes short of this.

— † If natural objects surpass its efforts, what is to be said of those which are supernatural?

— † Superstition to believe certain propositions, &c.*

— † Faith, &c.

II. † *Submission.*

We ought to learn to doubt, where it is proper to doubt; to be certain, where we ought to be certain; and to submit, where we ought to submit.† Whoever

* Nicole, in the same copy, thus developes this fragment:—"*It is* superstition to believe *that* certain propositions *are in a book, although we cannot see them, because we ought to see them if they were in it.*"

† Pascal at first wrote with more boldness:—"Man ought to possess three qualities;—that of the doubter, (*pyrrhonien,*) the mathematician, and the submissive Christian: these dispositions blend with and temper each other;—by doubting, when it is proper to doubt; by aiming at certainty, when necessary; by submission, when becoming."—Miscel. Writings, Introd., p. xxxiii.

does not this, knows not the true measure of the reasoning powers. There are those who violate all three of these principles, either by assuming everything as demonstrated, for want of understanding the nature of demonstration; or by doubting everything, through not knowing where to submit the understanding; or by submitting to everything, for want of knowing how to discriminate.

If we subject everything to reason, our religion will be stripped of all its mysterious and superhuman character. If we violate the principles of reason, it will become absurd and ridiculous.

St. Augustin. Reason would never submit, if it did not perceive that there are occasions when it ought to submit.

It is then right that it should do so.

There is nothing so truly reasonable as this disavowal of reason.*

There are two extremes:

To exclude reason, and to admit only reason.

III. Faith treats of things upon which the senses are

* This, and the following paragraph, are in the copy thus paraphrased by Nicole:—"There is nothing so reasonable as this disavowal of reason, *in matters of faith; and nothing so unreasonable as the disavowal of reason in matters not of faith. There are* two extremes *equally dangerous,—to* exclude reason, *to* admit only reason." This reading has obtained in the subsequent editions.

silent, but not of things opposed to their evidence. It is above, but not contrary to them.

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† It is not an uncommon thing to have to reprove the world of excessive facility. It is a natural extreme, like incredulity, and equally pernicious.—Superstition.

It is superstition to place our hope in circumstantials; (*les formalités;*) but it is pride to reject them.

— Piety is a different thing from superstition.

— To carry piety to the extreme of superstition, is to destroy it.

— Heretics reproach us for our superstitious submission. It is doing the very thing with which they reproach us.*

IV. Other religions, such as paganism, are more popular, because they deal in externals; but not with the discerning. To them a religion purely intellectual would be better suited; but it is otherwise with the populace. Christianity is, of all others, the one which is adapted to all classes, being composed partly of external observance, and partly of inward principles. It elevates the commonalty by principles, and humbles the pride of intellect by externals; for the people ought to be made to perceive the spirituality of the letter, and the

* The St. Germain copy has the following, added by Nicole:—"Reproach us, *to require this submission in things which are not matters of faith.*" This addition has been adopted in the subsequent editions.

intellectual to receive the letter in submission of understanding.

+ Externals ought to be combined with principles in our communion with God,—such as kneeling, praying with the lips, &c.,—in order that man's pride, which is unwilling to submit to God, may learn submission to the creature. To rely for aid upon these external forms is superstition;* to refuse to combine them with internal devotion is pride.

Man's dignity, in his state of innocence, consisted in the use of, and dominion over, the creatures; but now it is in separating himself from and subjecting himself to them. †

V. + There are but few real Christians; I mean, as regards faith. There are many who believe, but it is with superstition; and many who believe not, but in infidelity; few observe the mean between the two.

— + I do not here include those whose morals evince true piety, nor the multitudes whose belief is a sincere sentiment of the heart.

VI. + Those who dislike the truth, make a pretext of the multitudinous differences among those who oppose it; which shows that they love neither truth nor charity. Thus they are without excuse.

VII. It will be one aggravation of the lost, that they are condemned by that very intelligence of theirs,

* At first, "*is idolatry.*" † In the margin, "the senses."

through which they pretended to repudiate the Christian religion.

VIII. [+] *Authority.*

[+] So far from the mere fact of your having heard a thing being the rule of your belief, you can believe nothing without placing yourself in such a position as if you had never heard it.

[+] It is the harmony of all your faculties, and the settled conviction of your own reason, and not that of others, which must constrain you to believe.

[+] Faith is all-important.

[+] A hundred contradictions might yet be true.

[+] If antiquity were the rule of belief, the ancients were without a rule.

[+] If universal consent . . . If men would have perished. . . .

[+] False humility is pride.

[+] Raise the curtain.

[+] You have done wonders indeed, if we must be forced either to believe, or deny, or doubt.

[+] Are we then to have no rule?

[+] We judge of animals that they do well what they are capable of doing; is there no rule by which to judge of men?

[+] To deny, to believe, and to doubt on good grounds, are what running is to a horse.

(*In the margin:* [+] Punishment of sinners, error.)

There are two modes of enforcing the truths of our religion:—the one by the power of reason, the other by

the authority of the teacher. We forego the latter, and employ the former only. We say not, "Such or such a thing must be believed, for the book which teaches it is divine:" but we maintain that it should be believed, for such or such a reason; which is a feeble resource, reason being flexible to everything.*

IX. Those whom God has endued with sentiments of piety through the medium of the heart, are happy and assured. But others, not thus impressible, we can only gain an access to through the reason, hoping that God may himself impress our representations upon the heart: without this, their belief avails nothing to salvation.

God, in order to reserve to himself alone the prerogative of being our instructer, and to baffle us the more effectually as to the nature of our own spirits, has placed their mysteries so high above us,—or, more properly, concealed them in depths so profound,—as to render it impossible for us to unravel their perplexity; so that it is not by the struggles of our reason, but by its implicit submission, that we can effectually attain to the knowledge of ourselves. †

X. [+] Our religion possesses a mixture of wisdom and foolishness. Wisdom, because it is of all others the most addressed to the understanding, the most fully based upon miracles, prophecies, &c.; foolishness,

*| Montaigne says, Book ii., ch. 29:—"Our reason is flexible to all kinds of impressions."

† This paragraph is neither in the MS. nor in the copy. It was published in the first edition.

because these are by no means the things in which it consists: they serve, indeed, to condemn those who reject it, but they do not constitute the faith of those by whom it is professed. That which leads them to believe is the Cross: "*ne evacuata sit crux.*" Thus St. Paul, who was endued both with wisdom and with miraculous powers, says, that he came neither in wisdom nor in miracles, but to convert their souls. But those who come only to convince, (the understanding,) may properly say, that they come with wisdom and with miracles.

XI. —There is a great difference between the not being on the side of Christ, and avowing it; and the not being, but professing to be, on his side. The one may work miracles, but not the other; for it is clear that the one are opposed to the truth, but not so the other: thus the miracles are the most evident.

— † It is a thing so evident that God ought alone to be the object of our love, that no miracle is needed to prove it.

— † Happy condition of the church when it is sustained by God only!

XII. † True Christians are subjected to vanities; not that they are unconscious of them, but they acquiesce in the appointment of God, who, for man's humiliation, has subjected him to them. "*Omnis creatura subjecta est vanitati. Liberabitur.*"

† St. Thomas thus explains the passage in St. James respecting the preferences shown to the rich,— that if they do it not as in the sight of God, they subvert the rule of piety.

XIII. + This religion, so great in supernatural proofs, (Holy Fathers—blameless—wise—great—testimonies—martyrs—kings—David—established—Isaiah—prince of the blood royal,*) so illustrious in learning, after displaying all its wonders and its wisdom, repudiates the whole, and declares that it possesses neither wisdom, nor wonders; and glories in the Cross and *foolishness* only.

+ For those who by these wonders and this wisdom have entitled themselves to your belief, and authenticated their credentials, declare that all these things are unable to convert the heart, and render it capable of knowing and loving God; that the foolishness of the Cross, without wisdom or wonders. . . . . † the wonders without that power.

+ Thus our religion is foolish, in regard to effectiveness as a cause; and wise, in regard to the wisdom by which it was devised.

XIV. The Christian's God is one who leads the soul to feel that He is its only good; that all its repose is in Him; and that it can know no real joy but in His love; and He is one who, at the same time, constrains it to abhor all the hindrances to its communion with Him, and everything that prevents its loving Him with all its powers. The self-love and sensuality which check its aspirations are its griefs. This God is one who makes the soul feel

* This rude collection of parentheses, almost literally translated in the above form, evidently constitutes, in accordance with the writer's usual habit, heads and memoranda of topics which were to be afterwards amplified. (Transl.)

† Two or three words illegible.

the destructive pressure of self, and convinces it that He alone can furnish the remedy.*

XV. † They blaspheme that of which they know nothing! The Christian religion contains two main points:—it is equally vital to men to be acquainted with it, and dangerous for them to be ignorant of it.

† And it is equally of God's mercy that He has given indications of both these things.

† Yet do men conclude against the reality of one of these points, from that which ought to convince them of the other.

† The wise, who have asserted the existence of a God, have been persecuted; the Jews hated; Christians more than either.

† They saw by the light of nature, that if there be a true religion upon earth, the direction of all things should tend to it as to their centre. †

And on this ground they take occasion to blaspheme the Christian religion, of whose nature they are so profoundly ignorant. They imagine that it consists alone in the worship of a God, whom they regard as great, powerful, eternal; this is properly Deism, inasmuch as it is as remote from Christianity as Atheism, which is utterly opposed to it. Thence they conclude that this religion is not true, because they do not perceive all things concurring for the establishment of this point,—that God does not manifest himself to man with all the strength of evidence which they think he might do.

But let them conclude what they may against Deism,

* In the copy only. † In the copy only.

they will prevail nothing in disparaging the Christian religion, which consists essentially in the mystery of a Redeemer; he who, uniting in himself the two natures, divine and human, has restored mankind from the corruption of sin, in order, in his own divine person, to effect their reconciliation to God.

This scheme instructs men in these two truths:—the one, that there is a God, adapted to the worship and communion of man; the other, that there is in man's nature a corruption, which renders him unworthy of this God. It is important to man to know both the one and the other of these positions; it is equally dangerous to him to know God, without a consciousness of his misery, and to be conscious of his misery, without a knowledge of that Redeemer who is able to relieve it. It is the knowledge of one without the other of these facts, that gives birth either to the pride of philosophy,—which consists in a knowledge of God, without that of man's corruption,—or the despair of atheism,—settling down in a sense of man's ruin, without recognition of his Redeemer.*

Thus, as it is equally essential to man to know these two facts, it is equally of God's mercy that we are made acquainted with them. The Christian religion furnishes this knowledge; and it is its great office to do so.

Let us examine, in this view, the providential order of the universe, and see whether all things do not lead to the establishment of these two great facts of our religion.†

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* See "Conversation, Epictetus and Montaigne," (Miscel. Writings, p. 290.)

† In the copy only.

XVI. The entire course of events ought to have for their object the establishment and the ascendancy of religion; mankind ought to possess in themselves sentiments conformable to its instructions; and, finally, it ought in such wise to be the ultimate and central point of all things, that whoever becomes acquainted with its first principles should be able to give account both of man's nature in particular, and of the whole conduct of events in general.

XVII. + *On the Objection that the Christian is not the only Religion.*

So far from this being a reason for its not being true, it is, on the contrary, the very proof that it is so.

XVIII. Let them say what they will, it must be acknowledged that Christianity is an astonishing religion. "This is because you were born in it," it may be said. So far from it, that very fact puts me on my guard, lest I should be prepossessed in its favour. But though I was born in it, the facts are none the less as I have stated them.

XIX. + *Proving that sincere Jews and sincere Christians enjoyed one and the same religion.*

The Jewish religion appeared to consist chiefly in the headship of Abraham, the rite of circumcision, sacrifices, ceremonies; in the ark of the covenant, the temple in Jerusalem; and, finally, in the Law, and the covenant of Moses.

I maintain that it consisted in none of these things, but solely in the love of God; and that God repudiated all other things.

That God did not accept the posterity of Abraham.

That the Jews were to be punished, like Gentiles, if they offended. Deut. viii. 19, 20:—"If thou do at all forget the Lord thy God, and walk after other gods, I testify unto you that ye shall surely perish; as the nations which the Lord destroyeth before your face."

That the Gentiles shall be received into favour with God, equally with the Jews, if they do his will.

Is. lvi. 3, &c.:—"Let not the stranger say, The Lord hath utterly separated me from his people; the sons of the stranger that join themselves to the Lord, to serve him and to love the name of the Lord: even them will I bring to my holy mountain, and will accept their sacrifices; for my house shall be called a house of prayer for all people."

That sincere Jews considered the preference shown to them to be from God, and not through Abraham. Is. lxiii. 16:—"Thou art our Father, though Abraham be ignorant of us, and Israel acknowledge us not: thou, O Lord, art our Father and our Redeemer."

Moses also says that God does not accept persons. Deut. x. 17:—"God," he says, "regardeth not persons, nor taketh reward."*

* In the margin is written,—"The Sabbath was only a sign, Ex. xxxi. 13; and in commemoration of the departure from Egypt, Deut. v. 15. Then it is no longer required, since Egypt is to be forgotten. Circumcision was only a sign, Gen. xvii. 11; and, therefore, in the Desert they were not circumcised, because there they could not be blended with other people: and after the coming of Christ it was no longer necessary." (French Editor.) These statements, without further explanation, seem questionable. After

That the circumcision is commanded to be that of the heart. Deut. x. 16; Jer. iv. 4:—"Circumcise your heart; be no more stiff-necked," &c., &c.

That God says, he himself will hereafter do it. Deut. xxx. 6:—"The Lord thy God will circumcise thine heart and the heart of thy seed, to love him with all thine heart."

That the uncircumcised in heart shall be judged. Jer. vi. 26:—"For God shall judge the uncircumcised, and all the people of Israel, because they are uncircumcised in heart."

That external rites avail nothing without inward grace. Joel ii. 13:—"Rend your hearts." Is. lviii. 3, 4, &c. The love of God is recommended throughout Deuteronomy. Deut. xxx. 19:—"I call heaven and earth to record this day against you, that I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing: therefore choose life, that both thou and thy seed may live;" for God is thy life.

That the Jews, failing in this love, were reproved for their offences, and the Gentiles chosen in their place. Hos. i.; Deut. xxxii. 20, 21:—"I will hide my face from them; for they are a very froward generation, children in whom is no faith. They have moved me to jealousy with that which is not God; and I will move them to jealousy with those which are not a people, and with a foolish nation." Is. lxv.

Christ's coming, baptism was obviously appointed as a rite analogous to circumcision, and one which, being accompanied with the promise of spiritual blessings, should possess yet higher efficacy; but still showing that the people of the true faith were to be ritually distinguished from all others. And in the same manner, it is most probable that Pascal meant only, that the Jewish and ceremonial Sabbath was not required after the Jewish dispensation had ended; and not, that the spiritual Sabbath of Christianity was not to be retained. (Transl.)

That temporal good is fallacious, and true good consists only in union with God. Ps. cxliv. 15.

That the Jewish rites and sacrifices were displeasing to God. Amos v. 21; Is. lxvi., i. 11; Jer. vi. 20. David, *Miserere.* Ps. li. Even in the righteous. *Expectans.* Ps. l. 8—14.

That the sacrifices of the Gentiles will be accepted of God, and those of the Jews rejected. Mal. i. 11.

That God would make a new covenant in the Messiah, and the former would be broken. Jer. xxxi. 31.

Mandata non bona. Ezek. xx. 25.

That old things should pass away. Is. xliii. 18, 19; lxv. 17, 18.

That they should remember the ark no more. Jer. iii. 15, 16.

The temple should be rejected. Jer. vii. 12, 14.

That the sacrifices should be abolished, and purer ones instituted. Mal. i. 11.

That the priesthood after the order of Aaron should be superseded; and that after Melchizedek instituted by Messiah. "*Dixit Dominus.*" Ps. cix.

That the name of Jew should be abolished, and another given. Is. lxv. 15.

That the Jews should be without Prophets, (Amos,) without Kings, princes, sacrifices, and idols.

That the latter should be the better one, and everlasting.

And, notwithstanding, that the Jews should ever remain a people. Jerem. xxxi. 36.*

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* Our enthusiastic French Editor here, in his determination that nothing of Pascal's inditing shall, if he can prevent it, be lost, furnishes to

XX. † *Two descriptions of persons under every religion.*

† Among Pagans, some worshippers of brutes, and others of one God only, by the light of natural religion.

† Among the Jews, the carnal, and the spiritual, who were the Christians of the old dispensation.

† Among Christians, the carnal, who are Jews under the new.

† The carnal Jews looked for a carnal Messiah, and carnal Christians hold that the Messiah exempts them from the necessity of love to God. Real Jews and real Christians welcome a Messiah who inculcates the love of God.

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† Carnal Jews and Gentiles have no Redeemer; the latter expecting none, and the former expecting one in vain. It is Christians only who possess really a Redeemer.

Carnal Jews hold a middle place between the Christian and the Gentile. The Gentile knows nothing of God, and is earthly in all things; the Christian knows the true God, and aims to detach himself from earth. The Jew and Gentile have the same earthly attachments. The Jew and the Christian know the same God.

† The Jews were of two classes: the one had Gentile, the other Christian affections.

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the reader the following memorandum, written in the margin of the MS. at this place, which is evidently a part of some familiar note of the writer:—"I am extremely sorry that you have lost so much time in making useless arrangements; and assure you that you shall not again be so troubled on my account." (Transl.)

Carnal Jews understood nothing of the greatness or of the abasement of the Messiah, foreshown by their Prophets. They misapprehended the nature of his dignity;—as when it is said that Messiah should be David's Lord, although his son; that he existed before Abraham, and had seen him. They knew not that his greatness was that of Eternity; and they equally misconceived his humiliation and his death. "The Messiah," said they, "is to live for ever; and this man is dead!" They expected him, therefore, to be neither mortal nor everlasting; they looked for in him, in short, nothing but a carnal greatness.

Whoever forms a gross and carnal conception of the Jews' religion, judges ill. This is plain from their holy writings and prophetical remains, which prove that the law was not understood in its letter. In the same way, our faith is seen to be divine in the Gospel, the apostolical writings, and in tradition; but it appears absurd to those who abuse it.

According to carnal Jews, the Messiah should have been an illustrious temporal Ruler. In the view of the worldly-minded Christian, he came to absolve from the duty of love to God, and to *institute sacraments which are to do everything for salvation,* without our co-operation.* Neither the one nor the other is Christianity or

* "*Nous donner des sacraments qui opèrent tout sans nous.*" These are the original terms of the above passage,—rendered with some unavoidable amplification, although I believe not unfaithfully,—in which Pascal records a striking protest,—and the more important, as emanating from a Romanist,—against the ascription of an inordinate efficacy to the *sacraments.* (Transl.)

Judaism. The true Jew, as well as the true Christian, ever expected a Messiah, who should enforce love to God, and enable him, through that love, to triumph over his enemies.

XXI. [+] *Proofs common to both Testaments.*

To authenticate at once both Testaments, it is only necessary to ascertain whether the predictions of the one are accomplished in the other.

To examine the prophecies, it is necessary to have a clear understanding of them. For if they are received only in one sense, it will be clear that Messiah is not come; but if in a double sense, then it is equally certain that he has appeared in the person of Jesus Christ.

The whole question, then, resolves itself into this, —whether they have a double meaning.

[+] That Scripture contains that double sense attributed to it by Christ and the Apostles,—these are the proofs:—

1st. The writings themselves.

2d. Testimony of the Rabbis.

3d. Testimony of "*la cabale.*"

4th. Testimony from the mystical interpretation of the Rabbis.

5th. Testimony from the principles of the Rabbis;—that there are to be two advents of the Messiah, glorious and abject; that the Prophets predicted only the Messiah; that the law was not eternal, but to be changed on the coming of Messiah; that they would then remember no more the Red Sea; that the Jews and Gentiles would be united.

XXII. + *Proofs of Religion.*

+ Morals—Doctrine—Miracles—Prophecies—Types.

XXIII. + *Proof.*

+ 1st. Christianity, although so opposed to the natural inclinations, established by her own power, so firmly, yet without violence.

2d. The holiness of Christian principles, and their tendency to elevate, yet humble the spirit.

3d. The internal divinity of the Scriptures.

4th. The individual character of Christ.

5th. And of the Apostles.

6th. And of the Prophets.

7th. The Jewish people.

8th. The prophecies.

9th. Its perpetuity. No (*other*) religion possesses perpetuity.

10th. Its doctrines,—furnishing full conviction to the understanding.

11th. The purity of the law.

12th. The government of the world.

+ Hence it is unquestionable, that weighing the nature of our evidences, and the claims of this religious system, we ought not to oppose the impulses of our conscience in its favour; and it is most clear, that there is no ground to ridicule those who yield themselves up to such impulses.

XXIV. It is impossible to investigate all the diver-

sified proofs of the religion of Christians, without seeing that there is in them a force and cogency which no reasonable mind can resist.

1st. Consider the mode of its establishment. That a religion so opposed to the tendencies of nature, should obtain the ascendancy, by its own inherent qualities, without any aid from external constraint or authority; and yet with such force and power, that no violence or tortures could ever compel its martyrs to deny it; and all this, not only without the assistance of any temporal rulers, but in the face of the greatest earthly potentates arrayed in opposition to it.

2d. Meditate next upon the holiness—the elevation, at once, and the lowliness—of the principles of Christianity. Heathen philosophers sometimes raised themselves above their fellow-men by a greater severity of life, and by moral sentiments which seemed to approximate to those of Christianity. But we never find them recognizing, as a virtue, that which Christians designate as humility; and they would even have deemed such a disposition incompatible with their other qualifications and habits. It was Christianity alone which showed how to blend graces of the character, hitherto deemed so opposed; and which taught mankind that, so far from humility being inconsistent with other virtues, all other virtues, without this grace, are but vices and defects.

3d. Consider then the infinite and exhaustless wonders of the sacred writings! Ponder the vastness, and the sublimity, so far surpassing all human apprehension, of their contents; and, at the same time, their admirable simplicity of style,—utterly free from affectation or dis-

play,—and bearing marks of genuineness and truth, which it is impossible for the mind to resist.

4th. Consider, especially, the individual character of Jesus Christ. Whatever may be our views of him, it cannot be denied that he exhibited the largest and most elevated spirit. Of this he gave proof, in earliest youth, in his discussions with the doctors. Yet, instead of continuing to cultivate these superior endowments by study, and the society of the learned, thirty years of his life were consumed in sordid labour, and total obscurity; while, during the three brief years of his ministry, he took for his companions, and selected for the apostleship, a body of men, without learning, without cultivation, without worldly reputation; and exposed himself to the enmity of all who were the most distinguished for learning and wisdom in his day. Was not this a surprising line of conduct in one contemplating the founding of a new religious system?

5th. Reflect again upon these his chosen Apostles,—these men—uneducated, unlettered; yet endowed, at once, with a wisdom that confounded the deepest philosophers, and a power that baffled all the tyrants and governments, banded together to oppose the religion which they were commissioned to introduce!

6th, 8th. Look back, next, upon that wondrous series of Prophets, appearing during a period of two thousand years, in regular succession; all predicting—yet in such diversified ways—the minutest circumstances of the life of the Messiah, of his death, resurrection, and his mission of the Apostles; of the preaching of the Gospel, the conversion of whole nations; and a multitude of other

particulars relative to the establishment of Christianity, and the abolition of Judaism.

And think of the astonishing accomplishment of all these predictions, so perfectly centring in the person of the Messiah, that none can question them, but those who wilfully shut their eyes to the evidences.

7th. Consider the state of the Jewish people, both before and after the coming of Christ;—their flourishing condition before, and their desolations after the advent of the Saviour, and his rejection on their part: for we see them now without any religious system, without a temple, without sacrifices,—scattered over the face of the earth, the contempt and refuse of all nations!

9th. Observe, again, the perpetuity of the Christian religion. That it has, in reality, subsisted from the very commencement of the world, either in the person of the Old Testament Saints,—who passed their lives in the expectation of the coming Saviour,—or in those who received and believed in him after his advent; while no other religion has been of permanent duration;—which is the truest proof of authenticity.

10th, 11th, 12th. Lastly, consider the purity of the doctrines of this religion, which reconciles all apparent difficulties,—even the anomalies that are seen to exist in the nature of man; and all those other properties, superhuman and divine, which shine conspicuous throughout the system.*

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* The French Editor expresses a doubt (from internal evidences) of the preceding paragraphs, (XXIV., No. 1 to 12,) being of Pascal's own composition; and it would be imprudent hastily to question the grounds of his opinion. There are certainly, in the original, some tautologies in expression,

XXV. The conversion of the Pagan world was reserved for the gracious influences of the Messiah. The Jews long laboured for the same object, without success; all the efforts of Solomon, and the Prophets, were vain; Plato, Socrates, and the philosophers, could make no impression.*

XXVII. † The law imposed obligations, while it communicated no power to fulfil them. Grace communicates the power, while it imposes the obligation.†

XXVIII. † Motions of grace, hardness of heart, external circumstances.‡

XXIX. † That which men of the largest understandings tasked their powers to comprehend, this religion makes level to the capacity of infants!

XXX. † All the objects of faith are comprehended in

which, although by no means without example in this writer, are not found in those parts of his composition which exhibit most of what M. Faugère designates as the "*vive allure*" of his style. However this be, the passages in question, if not his own, have evidently been composed by a writer (probably Nicole or De Saci) who had imbibed largely of Pascal's own sentiments and diction; and they form a pleasing and valuable development of those heads of evidence in favour of Christianity, which had been just before enumerated. (Transl.)

* In the copy only.

† The original of this paragraph furnishes an instance of the condensation of Pascal's style, and the necessity of some amplification on the part of a translator. "*La loi obligeait à ce qu'elle ne donnait pas. La grâce donne ce à quoi elle oblige.*" (Transl.)

‡ These are again apparently mere heads of subjects intended to be discussed. (Transl.)

just views of Christ and Adam; and all morality in a right apprehension of sense and grace.

We are unable to comprehend the original glory of Adam, or the nature of his fall, or the transmission of his sin to ourselves. These are transactions adapted only to the apprehension of a nature utterly different from our own, and far surpassing our present capacity.

They are also things which it is wholly needless for us to understand, in order to procure exemption from their consequences; and all that it imports us to know is, that we are miserable, ruined, alienated from God,—but redeemed and restored by Jesus Christ; and of all these things our present dispensation furnishes the most incontrovertible evidences.

Thus the two proofs of our corruption and our redemption are found in the case of the wicked, who pass their lives in indifference to religion, and of the Jews, who are its irreconcilable enemies.*

XXXI. † To hear an artizan talk of wealth, a civilian of war, royalty! &c. But it is suitable for the rich man to speak of his riches: a Sovereign confers his gifts with dignity: God only can speak appropriately of God.

The narrative of the Evangelists is admirable in various particulars; and, among others, in their indulging in no invective against the enemies and executioners of their Master. We find nothing in their history directed against Judas, or Pilate, or the Jews.

* In the copy.

Had this moderation on the part of the evangelical historians, as well as many other beautiful features in their histories, been assumed, and adopted only for the purpose of attracting praise, although, in that case, they might have not ventured themselves to draw attention to the peculiarity, they would not have failed to procure commendation for it from their partizans. But as their conduct herein was quite without affectation, and their motives were entirely disinterested, they attracted neither notice nor praise. I consider that many of these traits in the Gospel histories have hitherto remained without due attention, which is a convincing proof of the indifference of their authors to either censure or applause.

XXXII. † *Question of Forms.*

When St. Peter and the Apostles were deliberating upon the abolition of circumcision,* and whether in so doing they should be opposing God's law, they did not consult the Prophets, but considered simply whether the Holy Spirit had been received by the uncircumcised. They deemed it of more certainty, that the choice of God would fall upon those to whom his Spirit had been dispensed, than those who had been strict in the observance of the Law.

— They knew that the consummation of the Law was the Holy Spirit; and therefore, as that might be possessed without circumcision, therefore circumcision was not necessary.

XXXIII.

— † God's words never differ from his intention, for it

* Acts xv.

is truth; nor from its result, for it is omnipotence; nor the means from the result, for it is wisdom. Bern. "*Ult. sermo in missam.*"

— † Aug., 5. "*de Civitat.*," 10. Take this for a general rule:—God is omnipotent for all things, except such as would prove him not omnipotent,—as to die, to be deceived, to deceive, &c.

— † Several Gospel histories serving for the confirmation of truth. Their discrepancies valuable.

— † The Eucharist following the Supper. Truth after figure.

— † The destruction of Jerusalem, (a type of the destruction of the world,) forty years after the death of Jesus Christ.

— † "I know not." Is that in his human character, or in that of Messiah? Matt. xxiv. 36.

— † Christ condemned both by Jews and Gentiles.

— † Jews and Gentiles typified by the two sons. Aug., "*de Civitate*," 20, 29.

XXXIV. † Apparent variances of the Evangelist.

XXXV. † (2C / V) Two figures in the Gospel for describing the diseases of the soul are drawn from the maladies of the body; nevertheless, as a single body could not present a sufficient complication of disorders, a variety of ailments was made use of for the purpose. Thus we find the deaf, the dumb, the blind, the paralytic, a Lazarus sickening and dead, the possessed: all these together, are not too much to symbolize the disordered soul.

XXXVI. As Jesus Christ was unknown while among men, so the truth of his doctrine remains, to superficial observation, undistinguished from various systems of religion extant in the world.

XLI. † The Apostles under Divine inspiration, foreseeing that the seeds of pride in man would give birth to error, and not deeming it fit to designate them expressly, have placed in Scripture, (and the Church has done the same in her prayers,) expressions and sentences opposed to them, which should produce their fruit in due time.

† In the same way Divine love is mingled with works of morality, in order to counteract our tendencies to sense.

† He who knows his Master's will and does it not shall be beaten with many stripes, on account of the advantages which the knowledge confers upon him.

† "*Qui justus est justificetur adhuc;*" on account of the power he possesses by means of his rectitude.

† Of him to whom much is given, much shall be required, on account of the power which he thereby possesses.

XLII. † *Against those who, relying upon the mercy of God, remain indifferent to religion, and barren of good works.*

As the two sources of our sinfulness are pride and indolence, God has revealed to us two attributes of his character, with a view to remedy these evils,—his mercy and his justice. The effect of his justice is to abase our pride, whatever be the degree of holiness to which we may attain; "*et non intres judicium.*" And the effect of

his mercy is to quicken our indolence, and promote good works, according to that passage,—"The goodness of God leadeth to repentance;"* and that other, addressed to the Ninevites,—"Repent, and see whether he will have mercy upon us."† And then, so far is the mercy from justifying any laxness on our part, that it is that very quality which most effectually opposes it; and instead of saying,—"If God were not a God of mercy, we should be obliged to exert ourselves in virtuous living;" we ought, on the contrary to say,—"It is because of God's mercies that we ought to make these efforts after holiness."

XLIII. † Abraham took nothing for himself, but only for his servants; so the righteous takes nothing of the world, or of the world's good-will, for himself, but strives only to acquire the mastery of his passions, saying to one, "Go," and to another, "Come." "*Sub te erit appetitus tuus.*" The passions are by this means rendered subservient to virtue. Love of acquisition, jealousy, displeasure, are thus impressed with a sacred character, and become virtues, equally with clemency, pity, constancy, which are also human passions.

We ought to treat them as slaves; and, leaving them their proper aliment, be careful that the soul does not partake of the same: for, when the passions acquire rule, they are converted into vices; and then they give to the soul of their own aliment, with which it becomes bloated and poisoned.

XLIV. The good man conducts himself by the rule

* Rom. ii. 4; John iii. 9. † A paraphrase of the original.

of faith in all things. If he has to reprove a servant, he looks for his correction to the Spirit of God; he prays for his change of disposition; he awaits the blessing of God upon his own efforts. And it is the same with all his other actions.

+ In all earthly scenes, sorrow is more congenial to him than joy. He loves his neighbour; yet his charity does not limit itself to him, but extends to his enemies, and even to the enemies of God.

There is no happiness, no rationality, no virtue, no gracefulness, like the true Christian's.

With how little elation of spirit does a Christian believe himself to be in a state of union with God! With how little of abjectness does he level himself with the worm of the dust!

+ How beautifully do we see him welcome life and death, happiness and suffering!

XLV. + MEMBERS.

+ *Commence here.*

In order to regulate our love of ourselves, we ought to represent to our thoughts a body composed of members, endued with intelligence; for we are all members of each other; and then consider how each member ought to love the others, &c.

* The fragments collected under the above title seem to be an illustration of the 4th and 5th verses of the 12th chapter of the Epistle to the Romans:—" For as we have many members in one body, and all members have not the same office; so we, being many, are one body in Christ, and every one members one of another."

+ If the feet and the hands followed their own predilections, they would never be able to do any service: it must be in subordinating their own particular inclinations to the general volition, by which the whole body is directed. Without this, there would be nothing but disorder and misery; but in combining for the general good of the body, they fulfil their own individual duties.

— + *Republic.*

+ The Christian republic, and even that of the Jews, had God alone for their head, according to Philo the Jew; "*on the Monarchy.*"

+ When they engaged in war it was for God; their ambition was for God's cause; they held their cities as from God, and dedicated them to God's service. 1 *Paralip.* xix. 13.

Two laws alone governed the whole Christian Republic, and they were better than whole codes of polity.

+ *Morals.*

When God had formed the heaven and the earth, the creatures of his power, but unconscious of felicity from their divine origin, he determined upon creating a race of beings, who should possess a knowledge of their Creator, and form a company composed of sentient members;* for the members of our body know nothing of the exactness of their combination, of their perfect adaptation to each other, and of the care and intelligence

* At page 467 of the MS., there is this addition: "Imagine a body full of sentient members." The rest of the phrase is wanting.

exercised by nature in enduing the different parts with life, growth, and duration. What would be their felicity if they could feel and see these things! But, for this purpose, they must be endowed with intelligence to apprehend, and with will to consent to the ordinances of the great and animating source of all things. Now if, after being thus endowed, they were to monopolize to themselves the general nourishment, without allowing it to be diffused throughout the whole body, they would be not only unjust but miserable, and would injure rather than benefit themselves; their interest, not less than their duty, consisting in obedience to the rule of the informing spirit, whose property they are, and who seeks their welfare more than they do themselves.

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† To be a true member, is to hold only life, being, and support, through and for the benefit of the entire spirit and body. Any one member, isolating itself from the body of which it is a part, possesses only a transient and dying existence.

Nevertheless, such a member deludes itself into the belief that it has an independent existence; and, losing sight altogether of the body to which it belongs, it aims to become a centre and finality to itself. Yet, having in itself no principles of life,—conscious that it is not a body, but not perceiving that it is a mere member,—it becomes a being full of extravagance and anomalies. Then, at last, brought to a knowledge of itself, it learns its true nature, as a part only of the universal body; drops its exorbitant self-love, and laments its past errors and follies!

+ By the very constitution of its nature, it could not love anything else, except for its own sake, and to serve its own purposes; for every being loves itself more than any other being. But, in tendering the body, it loves itself, because its own existence is identified with it; it lives only in, and by, and for the body: "*qui adheret Deo unus Spiritus est.*"

+ The body loves the hand; and the hand, if it were possessed of consciousness, would love itself, in the same manner as it is loved by the spirit: a love aiming to exceed *that* is exorbitant.

+ "*Adherens Deo unus spiritus est:*" we love ourselves, as being members of Jesus Christ. We love Christ, because he is the Body, of which we are members. We are all one. We are identified with each other, like the three persons (of the Holy Trinity).

+ Our duty is only to love God, and to hate ourselves.

— + Had the foot always been ignorant that it belonged to, and was dependant upon the body; if it had never possessed a knowledge of, or concern for, anything but itself; and then had been brought to a knowledge of its propriety in, and its dependance upon, the body; what would have been its sorrows, what its confusion for the past, in having been hitherto so useless to that body, which endued it with vitality, which could have reduced it to annihilation by cutting it off and rejecting it, in the same way as this unworthy member had separated itself from the body! How would it have implored a re-union! And with what unreservedness would it have submitted to that sovereign will by which

the whole body is governed,—even to a self-annihilation, and loss of its distinctiveness as a member! For every true member must be willing even to perish for the welfare of that body, which is the origin and end of its whole existence.

+ To constitute the happiness of the members, they must be possessed of a free-will, and it must be one conformed to the welfare of the body.

XLVI. + We become estranged* [from God] in the degree that we lose the influence of love.

— + Our prayers and virtues are abomination in the sight of God, if they are not the prayers and virtues of Jesus Christ. And our sins will never be the object of the pity,† but of the justice of God, if they are not those‡ of Jesus Christ.

— + It is he that has borne our sins, and *admitted us into*§ communion with him: for the virtues are his own,‖ and the sins those of another; while our virtues are another's, but our sins our own.

— + Change we the rule we have hitherto observed in judging of what is good. We once had no rule but that of our own pleasure; let us now take that of the pleasure of God: then all that he wills is good and just; all that he wills not is evil.¶

* It cannot be doubted that "from God," ought to be here added.
† The page being torn at this place, the word "pity" is added.
‡ It is the same with the word "those."
§ The same with "admitted," &c.
‖ So of the words "his own."
¶ So of "is evil."

† Everything that is contrary to the will of God is forbidden. Sin is forbidden by the general declaration of God, that he wills it not. Other things, not specifically forbidden, and which for that reason are deemed allowable, are, nevertheless, not always so. For when God places anything of that description out of our reach, and shows by the event, which serves for a manifestation of his will, that he does not choose us to be indulged with it, this becomes, equally with sin, a forbidden thing to us; because it is the will of God that we should forego the one, as much as the other. There is this difference only between the two,—that it is certain that God forbids us the sin, while the other is not so certain. But when it is manifest that God forbids us a thing, then that thing becomes of the nature of sin; since the withholding of the sanction of God, who is all goodness and rectitude, renders such an object injurious and evil.

Love (*charité*) is not a figurative precept. To maintain that Jesus Christ, who was manifested to take away figures and substitute truth, came only to introduce a species of figment of love, taking away the reality of the grace which was possessed before,—why this is detestable!

"If the light in you be darkness, how great is that darkness!"*

XLVII. † The victory over death. "What does it profit a man to gain the whole world and lose his own soul? He who will save his life shall lose it."

† I am not come to destroy life, but to save it.

* Matthew vi. 23.

— † Your slain lambs took not away the sins of the world, but I am the Lamb that take away sins. Moses gave you not that bread from heaven. Moses delivered you not out of captivity, and could not make you really free.

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† St. Augustin laid down, in words, that power should be taken away from sin. But he said this only fortuitously; for it might be that the occasion of this statement had not presented itself. His principles, however, show that, if the occasion presented itself, it was impossible but that he should state this, or, at all events, nothing opposed to it. It is therefore more to the point to be compelled to say it, on the occasion offering itself, than to have said it, the occasion being offered;—the one being of necessity, the other of mere accident. But the two together are all that can be desired.

XLVIII. † *Why God has instituted Prayer:—*

1. To communicate to his creatures the dignity of causation.*

2. To teach us from whom we derive our virtue.

3. To enable us to acquire a title to other virtues by effort.

† *Object.* But we shall believe that there is merit in prayer of itself?†

† That is an absurdity: for if, having faith, we shall not exercise virtue, how should we then have faith?

* "*De la causalité.*" The meaning here seems to be, an influence with the Divine Being, conferred by him upon his creatures. (Transl.)

† "*Mais on croira qu'on tient la prière de soi?*"

Is there more distance between unbelief and faith, than between faith and virtue?

(*In the margin:* † But for prayer to be acceptable, it should be such as pleases him.)

— † God can only act in accordance with his promises. He has promised to give holiness in answer to prayer. He has never engaged to hear the prayers of any but the children of promise.

XLIX. † Yet I have left me 7,000 in Israel. I love those worshippers who are unknown to the world, and even to the prophets.*

L. † Merit. This is an ambiguous term.

— *Meruit habere redemptorem.*

— *Meruit tam sacra membra tangere.*

— *Dignè tam sacra membra tangere.*

— *Non sum dignus.* — *Qui manducat indignus.*

— *Dignus est accipere.*

— *Dignare me.*

LI. Nature has her perfections, to show that she is the image of God; and her defects, to show that she is *only* the image.

— † Men not being accustomed to form merit, but only to reward it when formed, judge of God by themselves.

LII. † When Augustus had heard that among the

* 1 Kings xix. 18.

children that Herod had put to death under two years of age, was a son of his own, he said, it was better to be a swine of Herod's than a child. *Macrob.* Lib. 2.*

LIII. † From acquiring, through contempt, an insensibility to interesting objects, we may reach the point of being no longer interested by them.†

*** These two paragraphs, which somewhat abruptly terminate this interesting section, might have been more suitably included by the French Editor among the "Miscellaneous Thoughts," in a preceding volume. (Transl.)

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* In the copy only. † Ibid.

CHAPTER X.

ARRANGEMENT.

(ORDRE.)

EDITORIAL NOTICE.

THERE are a number of notes of Pascal's, dispersed amidst his MSS., relating to the plan, form, and matter of his "Apology for Christianity." The greater part bear the title of "Arrangement," (*Ordre,*) under which title they are here collected by themselves.

The perusal of these notes will plainly show that the plan contemplated by Pascal, though incomplete as to the two great divisions of his proposed work, was by no means so as to its subordinate divisions and details. It will hence also be perceived how impossible it has been to arrange in a strictly methodical order the various materials composing these volumes; and that it was difficult even to approximate to such an arrangement amongst these multifarious fragments.

(*French Editor.*)

ARRANGEMENT.

† *Arrangement.*

MEN entertain a contempt for religion; they hate it, and are afraid of its proving true. To remedy this, we should begin by showing that religion is not opposed to reason; then, that it is entitled to reverence,*—to ensure for it respect. Next, to render it attractive; to induce the good to desire that it might be true; then, to prove that it is true.

To be reverenced, because it has proved its knowledge of man.

To be loved, because it promises true happiness.

† *Arrangement.*

I should have far more fear of deceiving myself, and finding that Christianity is true, than of not deceiving myself by believing in its truth.

To commence by compassionating the unbelieving: how altogether unhappy is their condition! We would willingly not molest them, if to remain as they are would do them good; but it is that very thing which is injurious to them.

* "*Ensuite qu'elle est vénérable, en donner respect.*" Pascal, after writing this passage, as given above, corrected it thus:—"*Est conforme à la raison, vénérable . . . . .;*" then he returned to his first expressions, but without restoring the words, "*ensuite qu'elle est,*" which are erased in the MS.

+ *Arrangement.*

+ To investigate whatever is clear and incontestable in the condition of the Jewish nation.

+ *Arrangement.*

Explain why I should rather divide my moral system into 4 parts than 6? Why, in the same way, my pleas for virtue should rather be in 4, in 2, or in 1.* Why *exercise abstinence and fortitude*, rather then *follow nature*, or *follow our individual concerns without injustice*, according to Plato; or anything besides.

But, you will say, "Here is the whole comprised in a word." Yes, but that is useless if not explained; and in attempting an explanation, when you open out this precept, which comprises all the others, you fall into the very confusion you desire to avoid. Therefore, if they are all contained in one, they lie hid and useless as in a casket, and never appear divested of their natural confusion. Nature has established them all, without including the one within the other.

Nature has placed all her truths, each within itself. Our artificial procedure encloses one within another; but this is contrary to nature. Each holds its own place.

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* "*Pourquoi prendrai-je plutôt à diviser ma morale en 4 qu'en 6? Pourquoi établirai-je plutôt la vertu en 4, en 2, en 1?*" Of this somewhat obscure memorandum, the French Editor offers no explanation. Whether the meaning is correctly guessed in the above rendering, I can feel no certainty. (Transl.)

† *Arrangement.*

† I should have wished in this discourse to follow a methodical plan, some such as this:—to show the vanity of the ordinary modes of life; and then the vanity of the philosophical life,—of Pyrrhonists, Stoics, &c.; but such an order could not be preserved. I know but little myself of its nature, and how few there are that understand it! No human science can preserve such a systematic arrangement: St. Thomas has not done so. Mathematical science preserves it, but, with all its depth, it is useless.*

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† *Arrangement.*

After treating of man's corruption, to observe:—It is right that all who are in this condition should be aware of it; both those who are satisfied, and those who are unhappy under it. But it is not a necessary part of (Divine) justice, that all should perceive (the remedy in) redemption.

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† 1st part,—Misery of man without God.

2d part,—Happiness of man with God.

Otherwise,

1st part,—That nature is corrupt in her very essence and constitution.

2d part,—That Scripture contains a remedy.†

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* In the copy only.

† The groundwork of this leading division of Pascal's work is found in the following passage:—"There is nothing in the whole earth that does not prove either the misery of man, or the compassion of God; either his powerlessness without—or his power with—God." p. 157 *ante*.

+ *Arrangement for Dialogues.*

— + What am I then to do? I see nothing but obscurity all around me. Shall I believe that I am nothing? Shall I believe that I am God?

— + All things change, and succeed each other . . You deceive yourself: there is . . . .

— + What! Do you not yourself say that the heaven, and the birds that fly beneath it, prove the existence of God?—No.—And does not your religion say so?— No: for though this be, in a certain sense, the case with some minds whom God has enlightened to perceive it, it is not so in regard to the generality.

— + *Letter, on the subject of seeking God.*

And then cause him to be sought amongst the philosophers, Pyrrhonists, and dogmatists, so laborious in their researches.

+ *Arrangement.*

+ A letter* exhorting a friend to seek God; he will reply, "What good will it do me to seek? No fruit comes of it."—Then to reply, "Do not despair." He again will reply, that he would be glad to acquire some illumination, but that, according to the dictates of that very religion, even if he were to believe after this manner, it would avail him nothing; and therefore he is content not to seek.—To reply to this: "The machine."†

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* Here it would seem that, in addition to Dialogues, or interlocutions, for the purpose of carrying on his "high argument," Pascal contemplated to vary his work by an imaginary correspondence between a teacher and his disciple. (Transl.)

† This word, "*machine*," which occurs several times in this chapter, is found in the following passage: — "The habit of seeing Sovereigns

† *Arrangement.*

After the letter on seeking God, to prepare another for removing obstacles to the so doing, which will form the Discourse on the *machine*, and its preparation, and on seeking by means of the reason.

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† *Letter indicating the utility of the proofs by the machine.*

† Faith is distinct from evidence: the one is human,

surrounded by guards, music, officers of state, and all those things which mechanically challenge (*plient la machine*) respect and fear, inspires their subjects with reverence and dread, even when they are seen alone, and without these accompaniments; because our thoughts naturally connect these customary appendages with their persons. And the world, not knowing that this is the mere effect of custom, supposes that it originates in some inherent force possessed by them; whence comes the expression, 'There is divinity stamped upon the countenance,' &c." ("Miscell. Thoughts, No. X.," Miscell. Writings, p. 196.)

The expression, "*machine*," in this passage, seems to have the same meaning as in the fragments entitled "Arrangement." What Pascal here terms, "*plier la machine, préparer la machine*," is what is elsewhere termed, "*incliner l'automate.*" (See Note *, p. 176 *antè*.) In religion there are things which are intelligible only to those who practise them. To descend from spiritual experience to external observances, and to rise again from practical duties to spiritual feelings, is what keeps alive religion in the soul. Pascal is supposing a man who has not yet attained to the interior life in which faith consists, yet who sees it to be desirable, and aims to possess it. But such a person experiences many obstacles,—in his passions, his self-love, and the insufficiency of the proofs which mere reasoning furnishes him. In this situation it is that Pascal encounters him. He shows him, that if faith proceeds from God, it depends also, in some of its relations, upon ourselves: we have the power to remove some of the obstacles: that is, we can oppose the passions which separate us from God; engage our will, with the consent and under the direction of our reason, to follow him; and acquire those external habits which may enable us to re-approach to God. All this is the work of man: let him help himself, and he will be helped by God. Let him prepare the "machine;" God will place within it the main-spring, and an immortal inspiration ("*le souffle immortel*").

I have pleasure in assigning the above interesting and valuable note to its author, the *French Editor.* (Transl.)

the other a gift from God, "*justus ex fide vidit;*" it is this which God himself places in the heart, and of which evidence is often the instrument: "*fides ex auditu.*" But this faith is in the heart, and leads us to say, not "*scio*" but "*credo*" . . . . .

+ A letter upon the folly of human science and philosophy.

This to precede that upon *Amusement.*

"*Felix qui potuit . . .*"

"*Felix nihil admirari . . .*"

280 kinds of sovereign good in Montagne.

+ In the *Letter upon Injustice,* may be inserted the jest respecting the seniors who possess all.—My friend, you are descended on this side from Montagne; it is right therefore that your *senior should possess all.*

+ Why do you kill me?

Why do you kill me? What! Don't you live on the other side of the water? My friend, were you resident on this side, I should be an assassin, and it would be unjust to kill you in this way; but, being on the other side, I only show my bravery, and it is all right.*

+ Insert in the chapter on *Fundamentals,* that part in the one on *Figuratives,* respecting the origin of figures: why Jesus Christ prophesied during his first advent: why his predictions were of an obscure character.

* The reference here seems to be to a former passage on the injustice of wars, originating, as they often do, in mere local antipathies.—See p. 127. (Transl.)

SUPPLEMENTARY PASSAGES

RESPECTING THE JEWISH PEOPLE. (*See Chapter on the Jewish People.*)

EVERYTHING relating to this people excites my astonishment, and seems deserving attention.

I consider their law,—of which their boast is, that it is derived to them from God,—and it appears to me admirable:* it is the earliest of all laws;—so much so, that before even the word *law* was in use among the Greeks, this had been promulgated and observed nearly a thousand years without interruption. It is to me, therefore, wonderful to find the earliest law in the whole world, so uniformly perfect; and that, to such a degree, that the greatest legislators have borrowed from it, as appears from the Law of the Twelve Tables of Athens: and this again was adopted afterwards by the Romans, as would be easy to show if Josephus and others had not sufficiently treated of the matter.

Memoranda for the same Chapter.

[+] The sincerity of the Jews. — [+] The final, and defective letters.† — Their sincerity, though to their disgrace, and dying for it; having no parallel in the world, and wholly contrary to the tendencies of nature.

Same Chapter.

[+] This book will be your witness.

* At first:—"admirable, *and the finest laws in the whole world.*" The latter words erased in the MS.

† See Chapter on Figures.

ON THE CHAPTER ON PROPHECIES.

*Prophecies.**

[+] *Page* 659.—[+] In Egypt.—[+] Talmud.

[+] It is a tradition among us, that, when the Messiah shall come, the house of God, intended for the teaching of his word, shall be full of filth and impurity; and that the wisdom of the scribes shall be corrupt and debased. Those who fear to commit sin, shall be reviled by the people, and treated as fools and mad.

* The whole of this in the copy only.

TREATISE

ON THE

CONVERSION OF THE SINNER.

EDITORIAL NOTICE.

The Treatise on the Conversion of the Sinner, was first published, in the *complete works of Pascal*, in 1779, by the Abbé Bossut, who expressed no doubt of the authenticity of the fragments. Yet that editor had been acquainted with the third MS. Collection of P. Guerrier, where the same paper, under the title of "*Essay on the Conversion of the Sinner*," is accompanied with a note, in which Guerrier expressly says, "*he is not aware who was the author of this treatise.*"

The MS. *Suppl. Franc.*, No. 1485, appends, in its turn, also, the following note:—"This treatise was transcribed from a copy which is amongst the papers left behind by Mademoiselle Perier. It bears no author's name. I believe it to have been a writing of Mademoiselle Pascal previous to her entering the convent."

This conjecture seems unfounded; and we hesitate not to attribute this fragment to Pascal himself, because—

First. It is found in the small MS. in 18mo., as Pascal's; and, the fragments contained in the MS. being incontestably his, there is equal reason to believe that this is his also.

Secondly. It has all the characteristics of Pascal's thoughts and language; not, indeed, of his most mature and dignified style, but of that which had already proved so effective before the appearance of the *Provincials;* for this fragment, like that which follows, (the Prayer,) must have been composed about the year 1647 or 1648, when he was in about his twenty-eighth or twenty-ninth year;—at that period of his life which may be termed his first conversion; and it appropriately expresses the sentiments and feelings which then occupied his mind. (*French Editor.*)

TREATISE ON THE CONVERSION OF THE SINNER.*

THE first thing that God communicates to the soul which He effectively touches with his influences, is a peculiar intelligence and perception, by means of which such a soul regards all things—itself included—in a manner altogether new.

This novel illumination inspires the man with apprehensions, and impresses him with anxieties, which disturb the tranquillity he had heretofore experienced, in those things that had been wont to constitute his chief delight.

He can now no longer find rest in any of the sources of his former satisfaction. A continual scrupulosity opposes him in his pleasures; and that inward life which he now leads, allows him not to find his accustomed enjoyment in pursuits, to which he had before abandoned himself with the full devotedness of his heart.

But, notwithstanding this, he experiences (at first) a greater bitterness of heart in the exercises of piety, than in the vanities of the world. On the one hand, the vanity of visible objects affects him more nearly than the hopes of those which are invisible; and, on the other, the reality of the invisible touches him more than the vanity of the visible. Thus the actual presence of the one, and the substantial reality of the other, contend

* Third MS. Coll. of Guerrier, p. 300.

together for his affections; while the unsatisfactoriness of the one, and the invisibility of the other, disturb his peace; so that a disorder and confusion are produced.

. . . . . *

He considers perishable objects as passing away, and even as already vanished. Profoundly impressed with the ultimate nothingness of all that he loves, he trembles at the consideration that every instant is snatching from him some source of enjoyment, some object most dear to him;† and that the day is certainly approaching, in which he must find himself stripped of all those enjoyments on which he had most firmly fixed his hopes. In this way he arrives at the conviction that, his soul having hitherto been attached only to fragile and transitory objects, must, at the end of her earthly existence, stand isolated and desolate; having taken no care to attach to itself that true and substantial good, which might have sustained it during life, and cheered its prospects at its termination.

Thence it is, that such a person begins to consider as nullities everything which must return into non-existence:—the heaven, the earth, his own mind, his body, his relative ties; friends, enemies, wealth, poverty; degradation, prosperity, honour, reproach, reputation, contempt; authority, abjectness, health, sickness, and

* Bossut has supplied with his own language the breaks (*lacunes*) which occur in the MS. By comparing his edition, or those which followed it, with the present, these interpolations may be traced.

† This description of the soul trembling as it sees, every instant, something dear to it being snatched away, reminds us of a passage written at a later period:—"*C'est une chose horrible de sentir s'écouler tout ce qu'on possède.*" (MS. autograph, p. 229.)

even life itself. In fact, nothing of a briefer term of existence than his own spirit, is capable of satisfying the desires of that spirit, whose earnest and unceasing aim is to establish itself in a felicity as durable as itself.

He begins to be astonished at the blindness and insensibility in which he has heretofore existed; and while he considers, on the one hand, the large portion of his time which had passed away before reflections such as these occurred to him, and the multitudes around him who spend their lives in the same unthinking manner; and, on the other hand, the conviction presses upon him, that the immortal spirit can find no happiness in objects perishable in their nature, and which, at best, must be relinquished at death; he becomes overwhelmed with a sacred confusion and astonishment, which, while it disturbs his present tranquillity, is salutary in its future consequences.

He reflects within himself, that however large the number of those who live after the maxims of the world, and however imposing their authority who place their happiness in worldly good, one thing is nevertheless certain,—that even if these earthly objects possessed in themselves any absolute pleasure, (which, however, is proved by ceaseless and mournful examples to be untrue,) —the privation of these things, or the inevitable hour of death, must terminate this satisfaction; that when the soul has loaded itself with the treasures of temporal good, of whatever nature,—be it wealth, or learning, or reputation,—it is its indispensable condition, that it must be eventually stripped of all these objects of gratification; that if something satisfying has been achieved,

it is a satisfaction utterly transitory; and that if the soul has found any real good, it is anything other than a durable one,—since it is limited and circumscribed by the present fleeting existence.

It is in this manner that, by superinducing upon his natural pride* a gracious humility, God begins to elevate the subject of his influences above his fellows of the world around him. He condemns their mode of life, he abhors their principles, he laments their blindness; he applies himself to the acquisition of real good: he sees that such good must possess these two qualities,—the one, that its duration be co-existent with his own, and that he cannot be deprived of it without his own consent; the other, that it be more deserving than anything else of his devotedness and affection.

He perceives that in the blind attachment which he had heretofore felt for worldly things, that second quality *seemed* to be possessed by them; for he was then conscious of nothing that was more deserving of his love. But, inasmuch as they were utterly destitute of the former attribute, he knew that such things could not be the sovereign good. For this, therefore, he henceforth seeks elsewhere; and, instructed by an ineffable illumination, that it is to be found in none of the objects within, or without, or around himself,—in nothing, in short, internal or external,—he then begins to seek for it in objects *above* himself.

This elevation of the soul's aspirations is so mighty and so transcendent, that she pauses at nothing below

* "*Superbe:*" "L'orgueil, *superbia.*" Pascal uses this expression in other places.

the heavens themselves! Not less than this can satisfy her; no created object,—not angels, not beings the most perfect in the whole range of existence. She traverses all created good; and stays not in her career till she has reached the throne of God himself; where she begins to find that repose, and that blessedness, which are alone worthy of desire, and of which, without her own consent, she never can be deprived.

For even if all those attractions are not at first perceived in a course of piety, which God is wont to reveal to those who are the most advanced in the divine life, it is nevertheless seen that creatures cannot be more deserving of love than the Creator: reason, aided by the illumination of grace, leads the soul to the conviction, that God is the object, of all others, the most worthy of the affections, and that those only are deprived of his love who reject him; since to desire is to possess him, —to refuse is to lose him.

Thus does the soul rejoice in the discovery of a good, of which she cannot be deprived so long as she desires its retention, and which infinitely exceeds every other possession.

And amidst these new-born reflections, the man's eyes become opened to the greatness of his Creator; and he bows before him in the profoundest humility and adoration. He is, as it were, annihilated in his presence; and, unable to conceive ideas sufficiently low of himself, or sufficiently elevated of this his sovereign good, he strives continually to descend to the deepest point of self-abasement, and to strain his conceptions to the immen-

sities and infinitude of God.* At length, exhausted and baffled with these efforts, he subsides into silent adoration; he feels his vileness and worthlessness before his Maker; and desires nothing so much as to devote his existence here, and an eternity hereafter, to ceaseless praise and adoration of his perfections. Then are his eyes opened to the condescension and grace, by which a Being so majestic has manifested himself to such a feeble worm as himself; he is filled with gratitude for his love, and with confusion for having so long preferred the vanities of earth to the service of so gracious a Master; and, overwhelmed with compunction and penitence, he casts himself upon his compassion alone, to deprecate the unspeakable terrors of his just displeasure.

. . . . . .

He puts up urgent prayers to God, that, as He has mercifully condescended to reveal Himself to him, he may be pleased to show him yet more the way of approaching him acceptably, and retaining the privilege of communion with him. For, as it is the Eternal who is the object of his aspirations, so he aims to approach him only in the methods which he himself prescribes; desiring that He alone should be his way, his object, and his final aim. From prayer he proceeds to action, and seeks among those . . . . . .

. . . . . .

He begins then to be acquainted with God, and aspires

* We may perceive, in this passage, the germ of the thoughts elsewhere so magnificently developed, where Pascal represents to the imagination man engulfed in the two infinitudes of magnitude and minuteness:—"Let man then raise his views above the petty objects which surround him, and contemplate the entire expanse of nature," &c., &c. P. 63, *antè*.

after his presence. But as he is, as yet, unacquainted with the means of attaining to it, if his desire be sincere and true, he is like a person who, having lost his way on a journey, and being conscious that he is wandering, seeks the guidance of some one perfectly acquainted with the country * he is traversing . . . . . .

. . . . . .

He resolves to devote himself implicitly, through the remainder of his existence, to the will of his God; yet, inasmuch as his weakness by nature, and his proneness to former sins, impede his efforts after holiness, he is unceasing in his supplications to his heavenly Father, to draw him towards Himself, to retain him within His influences, and to bring him into an eternal union with Himself . . . . . .

In this way it is that the convert is brought to the conviction,—that he owes to God, as the author of his being, homage; as the source of grace, gratitude;—that, as guilty, he owes Him penitence and a satisfaction; as helpless and indigent, dependence.

Note of P. Guerrier: — "I have transcribed this paper from a copy amongst the papers which Mademoiselle Perier gave to the P. P. of the '*Oratoire de Clermont.*' It has the breaks (*lacunes*) just as they are here given. I am not aware who is the writer."

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* This portraiture of a soul aspiring after God, and seeking the aid of those who know him, recalls the following passage in the celebrated fragment on the existence of God:—"You desire to attain to faith, and cannot find the way. . . . Learn of those whose experience has been like your own. . . . There are those who know the path you desire to take, and have been cured of the malady from which you desire deliverance," &c. ("Infinitude, Nullity.")

† "*Lui satisfaire comme coupable.*"

PRAYER

FOR THE

DIVINE IMPROVEMENT OF SICKNESS.

EDITORIAL NOTICE.

THE advertisement prefixed to the first edition of the "*Pensées*," thus refers to this prayer: "It has been thought, therefore, proper to affix at the close of these Thoughts a prayer which M. Pascal composed, while yet young, during a sickness under which he was labouring, and which has already been two or three times printed from very incorrect copies,—a circumstance which arose from their being published without the privity of those under whose superintendence the present collection is furnished to the public."

This fragment, composed as above stated, "while yet young," must have been written at the end of the year 1647, or the commencement of 1648: it was at that period when Pascal was attacked with a malady occasioned by his excessive mental labours, which obliged him to repair for medical advice to Paris; and it was when he was experiencing the first fervours of his religious impressions.

In the absence of the manuscript text, which is now no longer in existence, the paper is exactly transcribed from the first edition of the "*Pensées*." (*French Editor.*)

PRAYER

FOR THE

DIVINE IMPROVEMENT OF SICKNESS.

I. Gracious Lord! infinite in goodness! of whose love not only the prosperity of thy chosen people, but even their afflictions are proofs, grant me thy grace, that I may not, like those who are ignorant of thee, misimprove thy righteous judgments, in the low estate to which I am now reduced. May I evince the sincerity of the principles with which thou hast endowed me, by acknowledging thee to be my Father and my God in whatsoever condition I am placed; by testifying that no variation in my state occasions any in thine; that, while I am only a creature of mutability, thou remainest ever unchanged; and that thou art no less the sovereign and gracious disposer of my being when thou afflictest and chastenest, than when thou blessest with consolations, and winnest with indulgence.

II. Thou gavest me health, that I might serve thee, and I abused the gift. Thou dispensest to me now sickness, for my correction: suffer me not to displease thee by impatience. Health has been misimproved by me; and I am justly punished for my fault: may I not lose the benefit of these thy righteous chastisements. And

since the corruption of my nature is so great as to render thy bounties, even, a source of evil, vouchsafe, merciful God, that thine all-powerful grace may render thy chastenings conducive to my good. If the world filled up the affections of my heart while I was in bodily vigour, let that vigour be laid low, if my spiritual good require it; and whether it be by feebleness of body, or by the fervour of divine love,—let my enjoyment of the world be destroyed, that I may find my satisfaction and delight alone in Thee!

III. Almighty God, before whom at the termination of life, and the final consummation of all things, I must render a strict account of all my actions!—Thou, by whose ordinance alone it is, that the world and all things in it subsist, for the purifying of thy chosen ones, and the punishment of sinners!—O, righteous God, who abandonest the hardened and reprobate to the intoxicating and deadly pleasures of the world; but, in the meantime, causest these bodies gradually to decay; and at death strippest the desolated soul of all its earthly delights!—O thou, who at that solemn hour wilt take from me every object in which my affections are bound up, and my heart absorbed!—great God, who, on that final day, wilt consume the heaven and the earth with all that they contain, justly destroying our vain idols, and the objects of our fatal passions, to prove to man that nothing is substantial, nothing durable, nothing deserving of his love, but Thyself!—I praise thee, O my God, I will bless thee all my days, that in reducing me to my present state of infirmity and weakness, thou hast anticipated to me this solemn hour, and already annihilated all my in-

jurious attachments! Yes, I praise thee, heavenly Father, and will ever bless thee, that it has pleased thee to incapacitate me for the satisfactions of health, and the pleasures of the world; and hast thus, in measure, for my benefit, overthrown those idolatrous affections which, in the case of the wicked, on that great day of thy wrath, thou wilt utterly destroy. Grant, O Lord, that I may now improve this thy righteous annihilation of my worldly attachments, that thou mayest not judge me in that awful day of destruction of my earthly existence, and of the world! For, O holy God, inasmuch as at that hour I shall be separated from worldly things,—stripped of all objects of attachment,—placed alone in thy presence,—called to righteous judgment for all my dispositions and my conduct,—enable me to regard this my sickness as the period of death; as a separation from the world, a privation of earthly attachments, a standing alone in thy presence;—that I may thus be brought to seek a real change of heart; and may know that it is thy mercy which hath condemned my earthly satisfactions to death, ere my actual dissolution shall place me before the tribunal of thy justice. And, as thou hast thus anticipated in me, O Lord, the terrors of death, may I be enabled to avert thy just condemnation; and call myself duly into examination, that I may find mercy at that day in thy sacred presence.

IV. And enable me ever, O my God, to revolve, in the silent meditations of my own bosom, the gracious dispensations of thy providence throughout my past life; that thy corrections should be made the source of my consolation; and that having spent my years of tranquillity in the bitterness of sin, I should now be indulged

with the ineffable sweetness of thy divine grace in those salutary afflictions with which thou hast visited me! Yet, O Lord, I acknowledge, so hard is my heart, so filled is it with the vanities, the cares, the solicitudes, and the attachments of the world; that neither sickness nor health, neither pious conversation nor study, neither the Scriptures of thy truth nor the divine revelations of thy Gospel; not the most sacred of mysteries; not alms-giving, austerities, mortification, nor miracles; not sacramental observances, nor bodily sacrifices;—not all my efforts, nor those of the whole world united;—not any or all of these could effect anything towards the very commencement of my salvation, if Thou didst not accompany them all by the transcendent aid of thy grace. Therefore it is, O my God, that I call upon thee as the God omnipotent, for that mighty gift which it is in the power of no creature of earth to bestow. Could any other being than thyself fulfil this my desire, I would not importune thee with my cries. But seeing, O gracious Lord, that the conversion of my heart, which I ask of thee, surpasses all the efforts of nature,—to whom can I address me for the achievement of such a work, but to the Author and all-powerful Disposer both of nature, and of my heart? To whom shall I cry, O Lord,—of whom seek for succour, but thee? Nothing short of God can fulfil my desires! It is God himself that I ask, and after Him will I seek: it is thee only, O my God, upon whom I call, that I may bring thee down to myself! Open to thyself, O Lord, my heart! take possession of this rebellious domain,—this seat of vice and sin. Keep it still in subjection to thyself. Enter its fastnesses: bind this

mighty enemy who holds it in his subjection; and subdue it, and all that it possesses, to thy sway. Take, Lord, to thyself those affections which the world hath heretofore ravished: spoil these its treasures, or rather resume them as thy rightful possession,—a tribute justly thy due, and stamped with thine own image. Thou thyself, O my God, didst imprint that image there at my baptism,—my second birth; but it is, alas! all effaced. The world has fixed in it its likeness, and thine is found no more. Thou alone couldst create this soul of mine; by thee only can it be re-created: thou alone couldst mould it in thine image: thou alone canst renew it, and replace within it thine obliterated likeness,—that is, Jesus, my Saviour, "the brightness of thy glory, and the express image of thy person."

V. Adorable God! how happy is that heart which is capable of thy love, the source of joys so pure, so elevating, so salutary! I cannot love the world without displeasing thee, without injuring and dishonouring myself: yet is the world still the object of my delight. Thrice happy, O my God, is that spirit which can find its joy in thee; for in that love it may be absorbed, not only without danger, but with unspeakable advantage. This is a good, substantial and enduring. Thy own unchanging existence will prevent any disappointment attending it: neither life nor death shall separate from it: the day that involves the wicked in a common ruin with their idols, shall unite the righteous in glory with thyself; and while the one shall perish, with all the fleeting objects of their affections, the other shall everlastingly exist, in that eternal and self-existent Being with whom they are united. Happy they

who can perfectly and freely love him, to whom they are of necessity compelled to surrender their affections!

VI. Perfect then, gracious God, those good desires with which thou hast inspired me. Be their end and consummation, as thou wast their author. Crown thou thine own gifts: for to whom do I owe them but to thee? Yes, Lord, so far from claiming aught of thee as a right, I humbly acknowledge that, having given up to the creature that heart which thou formedst,—not for the world, nor for myself, but for Thee,—I have no plea but thy pity. Absorbed in self, or earthly good, what have I to commend me to thy favour,—what to avert thy righteous displeasure? How can I duly praise thee for these gracious motions which thou hast awakened in me;—for that impulse, even, which leads me thus to render thee the feeble tribute of my praise?

VII. Touch my heart with sorrow for sin: without this inward pain, the sufferings with which thou hast visited this body will but prove renewed occasions of offence. Open mine eyes to see bodily affliction to be but the typical representation of the evils of the soul. Yet, O Lord, do thou so transform and mould them, that they may become the remedies of those evils; and make me to feel, in the pains I now experience, those sicknesses and wounds of the soul, of which I was once unconscious. Well do I now perceive, heavenly Father, that its greatest evil was that weakness and insensibility which took from it the sense of its real misery. Impress upon me this solemn truth; and let the rest of my life be a continual course of penitence for my past offences!

VIII. For if even, O my Lord, my past years have

by thy restraining grace been exempted from the grosser acts of sin, how hateful must that portion of my life have been in thy sight, through the continual negligences in which it has been passed; through my misimprovement of thy most holy Sacraments, and contempt of thy inspired Word; through habitual indolence, and the total barrenness of my actions and my thoughts; through my waste of that time which thou gavest me to devote to thy service, to hold at thy disposal, and to fill up with penitence for daily faults and infirmities,—those, even, to which the holiest are subject,—and which, without habitual contrition, are to them a constant occasion of falling. My past life, O God, has been one of continual opposition to thy will!

IX. Yes, Lord, I have till now been ever deaf to thy remonstrances, and ever despised thy revelations; I have set up my own judgment against thine; I have repudiated those holy precepts, which, on thy coming into the world, thou broughtest with thee from the bosom of the eternal Father, and in accordance with which thou wilt hereafter judge all mankind. Thou saidst,—"Blessed are those that weep, and woe unto those that receive now their consolation!" But I have said,—"Woe unto those that mourn, and thrice happy the prosperous!" I have said,—"Happy they who are possessed of affluent fortune, high reputation, robust health!" And why did I thus esteem them happy, but because all these advantages gave them ampler means of enjoying the creature, which is but to displease thee? Yes, Lord, I acknowledge that health was in my eyes a boon, —not as it furnished better means of serving thee, of

devoting my days and nights to thy glory, and of benefiting my fellow-creatures; but because I could more unrestrictedly abandon myself to the sensual enjoyments of life, and find higher relish for fatal pleasures. Let it please thee, Lord, now to re-mould my corrupted mind, and to render my views conformable to thine. May I deem myself happy in being afflicted: in my incapacity for external joys, may my spirit be purified and brought to accordance with thine: and while, through infirmity, I am unable to seek thee in external objects, may I feel thy sacred presence here within. For thy domain, O Lord, is in the hearts of thy people; and well do I know that I shall find it even in myself, if I can but make thy spirit and thy sentiments my own!

X. Yet, O Lord, what can such a one as I do, that may prevail with thee to pour out thy Spirit upon this world of misery? Everything in me must be hateful in thy holy eyes, and utterly opposed to thy sacred character. Nothing in me but my sorrows can claim any measure of resemblance to thyself. Look then with compassion upon the griefs I now experience, and those with which I am yet further threatened. Let thy pitying eye regard the wounds, which thine hand, O my Saviour, hath inflicted. Thou who lovedst thine own sorrows even unto death; and, though a God, didst become man, only to suffer more than any other man, for his salvation!—Thou who didst, after man's sin, clothe thyself with flesh, and take to thyself a mortal body, that thou mightest suffer all the penalties which man's guilt had incurred!—Thou who didst so sympathize with sufferings, that thine own flesh was the pattern of more suffering

than the world had till then witnessed!—have compassion upon my hapless body;—not for itself, for it deserves nothing but thy wrath; but for the afflictions it is enduring, which can alone render it an object of thy pity. Look then upon my afflictions, gracious Lord, and let my sorrows propitiate thy sacred visitations. But that I may be rendered a fitting habitation for thee, grant that, if my body be, like thine, called to endure affliction, although for my offences only, my soul may also resemble thine in its sorrow for those offences; that thus I may suffer with thee, and like thee, in my body and in my spirit.

XI. And that my afflictions may be sustained in a becoming manner, let thy consolations, O Lord, ever accompany them. I ask not exemption from sorrow,—for it is the lot of the saints. But I ask that I be not left to the sorrows of nature, without the consolation of thy Spirit: for that is the curse of the outcasts from thy kingdom. I ask not for a plenitude of consolation, without alloy of suffering,—for that is the life of glory. Neither do I ask for sorrows unalleviated by consolation,—for that is the unhappy state of the rebellious and unbelieving. But, O Lord, I desire that I may exemplify thy holy religion by experiencing, at once, the sorrows of nature for my sins, and the consolations of the Spirit through thy grace. I would not suffer thy chastisements without comfort, but would enjoy chastisements and comfort together; that, in due time, the afflictions may be removed, and the consolation only remain. Before the coming of thy Son, Lord, thou didst see fit to leave the world to the sufferings of nature without

consolation; now, thou dost deign to comfort and alleviate the sorrows of the righteous by the grace of thy beloved Son; and thou wilt hereafter crown them with perfect blessedness, in the vision of His glory. It is thus that by the most admirable gradations thou accomplishest thy work. From unconsoled suffering thou hast delivered me; carry me, I pray thee, in safety through the stage of comforted and mitigated sorrow; that, by means of it, I may attain at last to peace and glory. Thy grace, O my God, is the crowning object and completion of all my desires!

XII. Suffer me not, my Saviour, to contemplate, in insensibility and alienation, thy holy soul borne down with mortal sorrow, and thy body stricken to death, for my sins, without experiencing joy on account of my own sufferings, both of the body and the soul. How shameful, yet how common is it in the generality of thy people, and in myself also, that, while thy bleeding sweat poured down for the expiation of our sins, we can pass our lives in unthinking voluptuousness! That those who profess to be thy disciples; who in baptism renounced the world for thy service; who, in the face of the Church, have solemnly sworn to live and to die to thee; who maintain that it was the world which persecuted and slew thee; who believe that thou wast exposed to the wrath of God, and the cruelty of man, for their redemption;—that those, I say, who make all these things articles of their belief; who regard thy crucified body as the sacrifice for their salvation; who deem the vanities and the sins of the world the alone cause of thy sufferings, and the world itself thy executioner;—that

they, in such a world, should give the rein to the same guilty pleasures; and that those who would tremble with horror to see one of their own race caress and cherish the murderer of his father, (and he a parent who had devoted himself to death for the life of his son,) should live, as I have done, in reckless enjoyment, in the midst of that very world which I knew to be the murderer of my God and my Father, of him who gave himself to death for my salvation, and bore, in his sacred person, the penalty of my offences! Righteous was it in thee, O Lord, to cut short this guilty joy, this fatal repose, to which I had abandoned myself under the very shadow of death!

XIII. Take from me then, gracious God, all sorrow on account of corporeal sufferings, and the disappointment of my sensual inclinations and worldly hopes, while thus thoughtless of promoting thy glory; and inspire me alone with sorrows conformed to those of thine own spirit. Let the afflictions I am now enduring appease thy just displeasure, and be the means of my change of heart, and final salvation. May I henceforth desire health and prolonged life, only that they may be spent in thy service, and devoted to sacred communion with thee. I ask neither health nor sickness, neither life nor death; dispose only of my sickness or my health, of my death or my life, in such manner as may most conduce to thy honour, and to the welfare of the church and of thy saints, of whom, through thy grace, I desire to form a portion. Thou only knowest what may be most for my good. Sovereign Arbiter! dispose of me altogether as thou shalt see best! Replenish or impoverish me as

thou wilt! but conform my will to thine; and enable me, in a humble and entire submission, and a holy confidence, to wait thy providential guidance, and to acquiesce in thy gracious disposal.

XIV. Grant, O God, that I may receive all the dispositions of thy hand with a prepared and equal mind, ignorant as I am what I ought to desire, and unable to ask any one thing rather than another, without presumptuously forming judgments and incurring responsibilities of events, which thy wisdom has justly concealed. All that I know, O Lord, is this:—that it is my welfare to obey, and my detriment to offend thee. Beyond this, what know I of good or evil in whatsoever befalls me,—be it health or sickness, abundance or poverty, or any other events of this changing scene? What are they all but secrets that pass the knowledge of men or of angels; mysteries concealed in thy providential will, which I desire ever to adore, and seek not vainly to fathom?

XV. Whatever then, gracious Lord, be thy disposal of me, let my will be conformed to thine. If sickness be my lot, may I glorify thee in my sufferings. Through them alone can I attain unto glory: for in that way didst thou thyself even, O my Saviour, deign to proceed to thy glory. It was by thy sufferings that thy disciples recognized thee; and by similarity in sufferings it is, that thou dost acknowledge thy disciples. Proclaim me then a disciple by those sufferings, both of the body and of the mind, which thou hast appointed as the chastisement of my past offences. And since no offering is acceptable to the Father which is not made through

thyself, unite my will to thine, my sufferings to those which thou hast endured; and make them wholly thine own. Unite me to thyself, and fill me with thy blessed Spirit. Enter into my heart, take possession of my soul; bear therein my afflictions, and continue to endure in me that yet remaining portion of thy passion, which thou designest to finish and consummate in the person of thy members. Filled thus with thee, may it be no longer myself that lives and suffers, but thou, my Saviour, who livest and sufferest in me; and having now had a share,—however small,—in thy sufferings, mayest thou fill me entirely with that glory which is their reward, and wherein thou dwellest, with the Father and the Spirit, world without end! Amen.

THE END.

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